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VERON

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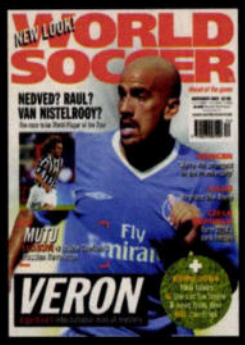

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NOVEMBER 2003

WORLD SOCCER comment

HOWEVER much we try to concentrate on footballing matters this month – be it Juan Veron's new role for Argentina (page 30), Lazio's revival under Roberto Mancini (44) or the contenders to be World Player of the Year (6) – it is impossible to avoid the troubling headlines that have beset English football in recent weeks.

We've had it all: sex, drugs and Gary Neville leading an England players' revolt. A common theme has been the apparent belief of players that they are above the law, untouchable by football's regulators.

But should we be so surprised that it has come to this?

Players are by no means solely to blame for the game's ills. But in the past decade their earnings have lost all touch with reality. Their increasingly bad behaviour is just a reflection of that.

The recent stories cannot be seen outside the context of the wider game. A game where high-profile managers confidently defend the on-pitch indiscipline of their players. Where agents do their utmost to ensure their clients get rich quick. Where clubs pay telephone-number salaries to players not old enough to vote. Where tabloid newspapers happily pay thousands of pounds for salacious details of footballers' nocturnal activities.

'You're nothing without us' is the defence of players who take the public to be mugs. Yet everybody who has taken out a pay-TV subscription, bought a replica shirt or renewed their season ticket has contributed to the lifestyles that today's footballers enjoy.

Players – not to mention their clubs – ignore the source of their wealth at their peril. Fans' loyalty, patience and finances are being stretched to breaking point. Surely, they cannot take much more.

The Football Association, under new chief executive Mark Palios, took an admirable stand by dropping Rio Ferdinand from the England squad to face Turkey. Palios then held his nerve when faced with a prospective millionaires' mutiny.

Now clubs need to show the same sort of determination in dealing with player indiscipline.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com)

*** SAVE MONEY ON WORLD SOCCER SEE OUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER ON PAGE 28

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BRAZIL SET THE PACE ...ARGENTINA DISAPPOINT

SOUTH AMERICA: Mixed fortunes for the continent's leading sides in the first two rounds of the marathon World Cup qualifying campaign. **Page 68**

New investors for MLS

UNITED STATES: After years of searching, Major League Soccer has found two new backers. **Page 26**

Same old story

ARGENTINA: The League has resumed after a month-long suspension following another outbreak of hooligan violence. **Page 24**

Euro 2004 qualifiers

The full story of the winners and losers from the final, decisive weekend of the campaign. **Page 83**

Doubts over Simak

GERMANY: The pressures of professional football have forced Hannover's Czech midfielder Jan Simak to contemplate retirement – at the age of 24. **Page 20**

War on Monaco

FRANCE: Several First Division clubs have launched a campaign against Monaco because of the extra spending power their special tax status brings them. **Page 21**

Besiktas back on song

TURKEY: The defending champions have hit their stride, recording a stunning 2-0 win away to Chelsea in the Champions League. **Page 64**

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

ITALY: The death of a Napoli fan at the Serie B game against Avellino has raised fears of a rise in hooligan violence. Page 18

MOVE OVER, MADRID

SPAIN: Valencia and Deportivo are setting the pace in Spain – and calling into question why Real Madrid and Barcelona are still referred to as the Big Two. Page 16

Esperance ease through

TUNISIA: The 1994 African Champions Cup winners became the first team to reach the semi-finals of this year's Champions League. **Page 71**

Arsenal
MERIVA
EMENS
mobile
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WORLD SOCCER AWARDS 2003

IT'S UP TO YOU!

Vote for your World Player, Team and Manager of the Year

IN A sports world flooded with polls, *World Soccer* is consulting YOU to cast your vote for awards that pre-date virtually all the opposition.

Our poll for World Player, Team and Manager of the Year has been running since 1982, when Italy's Paolo Rossi was the inaugural winner after his achievements at the World Cup finals in Spain.

Other organisations have sought to share our glory, copied our idea. FIFA, for instance, launched its own award a decade later. But the FIFA award, dare we say it, is in danger of being buried amid the self-congratulatory avalanche of other awards, prizes and baubles distributed by the governing body.

That's FIFA's right – just as it is *World Soccer's* right to claim primacy over the world award. Our voting comes from right across the worldwide spectrum of officials, coaches and – most important – fans. Having said that, it is inevitable that the award-winners this year are again likely to be Europe-based. Just about every continent sells its best players to Europe as fast as the club accountants can fill out the paperwork. Modern communications mean, in return, that Europe's own heroes are as well known in Montevideo as in Milan.

The vote is always more intriguing in a year devoid of the focal point of a World Cup or European Championship finals. A player, team and coach have a whole year to demonstrate their abilities rather than have them examined over a few short weeks.

The Italian media, already, is running a major unofficial campaign for Paolo Maldini and Pavel Nedved and, to a lesser extent, Francesco Totti and Andrii Shevchenko. Maldini, once a winner of the *World Soccer* award, has made a remarkable comeback after a disappointing time at the 2002 World Cup. He emulated his father Cesare in captaining Milan to victory in an England-staged European Cup Final and has shown such consistent form that he is being pressed perpetually to rescind his national team retirement decision. The nature of these polls is that they are dominated by forwards – which makes Maldini's appeal all the more remarkable.

That said, another defender – Roberto Carlos of Real Madrid and Brazil – has put together a similarly spectacular volume of work down the years.

The Champions League, in which Maldini has shone, is one international tournament in which star quality can be compared. Real Madrid fans, for example, believe award recognition is long overdue for Raul, who, in his mid-20s, already has Alfredo Di Stefano's European scoring record in his sights.

Then again, the Euro 2004 qualifying competition has provided an extra platform on which Juventus' Pavel Nedved has been able to show his genius. Nedved helped inspire Juve to the Champions League Final and was a key figure in securing an early European Championship place for the Czech Republic.

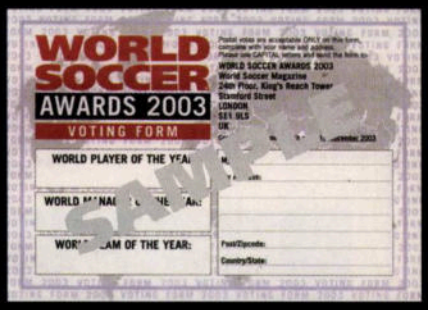
David Beckham, for his remarkable response to the pressure of his move to Madrid, is English football's leading contender, along with Premiership imports Thierry Henry at Arsenal and Manchester United's Ruud Van Nistelrooy.

Boca Juniors, in maintaining their domination of the Libertadores Cup, might consider they hold an edge of consistency over Milan in the Team of the Year award stakes. But there are also the national teams to consider. France, for instance, bounced back from their World Cup disaster to stroll through to the Euro 2004 finals while also winning the Confederations Cup.

Their coach, Jacques Santini, thereby merits consideration for Manager of the Year along with Boca's Carlos Bianchi, Milan's Carlo Ancelotti and Jose Mourinho at treble-winning FC Porto.

It's up to you.

Keir Radnedge


WORLD SOCCER
AWARDS 2003
VOTING FORM
WORLD PLAYER OF THE YEAR
WORLD MANAGER OF THE YEAR
WORLD TEAM OF THE YEAR:
SAMPLE

VOTING

Please use the form below (or a photocopy) to cast your vote. This year, in a change to the voting process, additional weight will be given to votes from *World Soccer* subscribers, who can vote on the form inserted with the magazine.

Please use CAPITAL letters when you complete the form. Send it, so that it arrives by December 1 at the latest, to:

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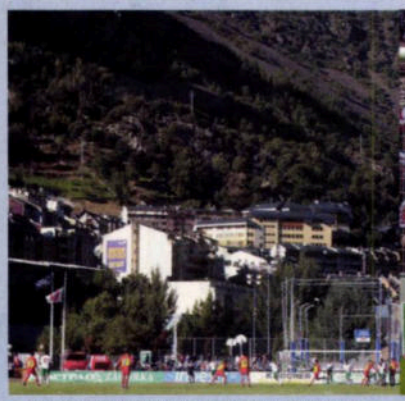


Bulgaria seal their place at the Euro 2004 finals in Portugal following a 3-0 win in Andorra

10/09/03

Jon Dahl Tomasson scores Denmark's opening goal in the 2-2 draw with Romania in Copenhagen

10/09/03

Scotland's Maurice Ross is sent off against Germany

10/09/03

Northern Ireland fail to score for a record 12th match running after losing 1-0 to Armenia

10/09/03

WS WORLD SOCCER Good month... bad month...

Dream derby...Kaka was in fine form for Milan in the victory over Inter

good...

TIMO HILDEBRAND Stuttgart's keeper extended his unbeaten run to 825 minutes after keeping a clean sheet against Koln, breaking Oliver Kahn's Bundesliga record.

KAKA The Brazilian midfielder was hailed as the new star of Serie A after a highly polished performance in Milan's 3-1 derby defeat of Inter.

ALFREDO DI STEFANO The guest of honour at Real Madrid's Trofeo Bernabeu match against River Plate, 50 years to the day after he moved between the two clubs.

DIDIER DROGBA In great goalscoring form for Marseille, including a Champions League hat-trick against Partizan Belgrade.

bad...

ENRIQUE ROMERO The Deportivo La Coruna defender missed a League match against Osasuna because he was hospitalised after being bitten by a snake at Pamplona airport.

RIO FERDINAND Dropped from England's squad to face Turkey after "forgetting" to make himself available for a drugs test at Manchester United's training ground because he was moving house.

GLENN HODDLE, EWALD LIENEN, LEONARDO MENICHINI AND JAIME PACHECO Sacked by Tottenham, Monchengladbach, Ancona and Mallorca respectively to become the first managerial casualties in their leagues this season.

RIVALDO Eclipsed by Kaka and Rui Costa at Milan, released by the club only to be reinstated, but now up for sale in the mid-season transfer window.

CRAIG BELLAMY Fined £750 after admitting threatening behaviour outside a Cardiff nightclub. A charge of racially aggravated behaviour was dropped.

Raul scores twice in Spain's 2-1 defeat of Ukraine

10/09/03

Mikael Forssell scores Finland's equaliser in the 1-1 draw with Wales in Cardiff

10/09/03

Steve McManaman makes his debut for Manchester City

14/09/03

Notes & quotes

"This was no mechanical coincidence, this was a sign. God was telling me it was the right time to call it a day."
Brazilian goalkeeper Claudio Taffarel on his decision to retire after his car broke down en route to his first day at new club Empoli.

"The supporters were invasive and thought you were their property. The journalists never left me in peace and used to ask my gardener about my private life."
Dennis Bergkamp still shudders when he thinks about his two years at Internazionale.

Tally query...Ronaldo, with Pele

"Pele scored 95 goals for Brazil and that's all there is to it. You cannot touch legends."
Brazil federation chief Ricardo Teixeira scolds Ronaldo for demanding that Pele's goal total for the *selecao* be recounted. Ronaldo had argued that many of Pele's goals were scored in unofficial games.

"I'm no little Maradona, just Andres. No one will ever come close to emulating Diego."
Wolfsburg's Argentinian No 10 Andres D'Alessandro plays down suggestions that he is Maradona reincarnate.

ESM EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

TEAM OF THE MONTH – SEPTEMBER 2003

La Gazzetta dello Sport · don balon · kicker · Top Sport Sport-Express · Foot Magazine · World Soccer · A Bola · Voetbal International · Fanatik · Tips bladet

HOW THEY VOTED

A BOLA (POR)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); Curro Torres (Valencia), Van Buyten (Marseille), Desailly (Chelsea), Lahm (Stuttgart); Nedved (Juventus), Aimar (Valencia), Zidane (Real Madrid); Drogba (Marseille), Morientes (Monaco), Van Nistelrooy (Manchester United)

DON BALON (SPA)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); Trabelsi (Ajax), Cannavaro (Internazionale), Chivu (Roma), Evra (Monaco); Beckham (Real Madrid), Aimar (Valencia), Duff (Chelsea); Kezman (PSV Eindhoven), Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Van Nistelrooy (Manchester United)

FANATIK (TUR)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); J Zanetti (Internazionale), Materazzi (Internazionale), Chivu (Roma); Ballack (Bayern Munich), Appiah (Juventus), Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Duff (Chelsea); Di Vaio (Juventus), Van Hooijdonk (Fenerbahce), Makaay (Bayern Munich)

FOOT MAGAZINE (BLG)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); Johnson (Chelsea), Bordon (Stuttgart), Bridge (Chelsea); Ballack (Bayern Munich), Keane (Manchester United), Aimar (Valencia), Giuly (Monaco), Nedved (Juventus); Van Nistelrooy (Manchester United), Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna)

GAZZETTA DELLO SPORT (ITA)
Toldo (Internazionale); Zago (Besiktas), Navarro (Valencia), Ricardo Carvalho (FC Porto), Evra (Monaco); Appiah (Juventus), Aimar (Valencia), Zidane (Real Madrid); Van Nistelrooy (Manchester United), Drogba (Marseille), Adriano (Parma)

KICKER (GER)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); J Zanetti (Internazionale), Gallas (Chelsea), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid); Giuly (Monaco), Aimar (Valencia), Nedved (Juventus), Rothen (Monaco); Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Van Nistelrooy (Manchester United), Anelka (Manchester City)

SPORT EXPRESS (RUS)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); G Neville (Manchester United), Materazzi (Internazionale), Bordon (Stuttgart), Cole (Arsenal); Karpin (Real Sociedad), Nedved (Juventus), Beckham (Real Madrid), Hleb (Stuttgart); Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Shevchenko (Milan)

TIPS-BLADET (DEN)
Toldo (Internazionale); Michel Salgado (Real Madrid), Naybet (Deportivo La Coruna), Juan (Bayer Leverkusen), Zambrotta (Juventus); Beckham (Real Madrid), Juninho (Lyon), Baraja (Valencia), Ronaldinho (Barcelona); Shevchenko (Milan), Mutu (Chelsea)

VOETBAL INTERNATIONAL (HOL)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); Cannavaro (Internazionale), Bordon (Stuttgart), Chivu (Roma); Giuly (Monaco), Beckham (Real Madrid), Aimar (Valencia), Nedved (Juventus); Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Adriano (Parma), Shevchenko (Milan)

WORLD SOCCER (UK)
Hildebrand (Stuttgart); Michel Salgado (Real Madrid), Cannavaro (Internazionale), Chivu (Roma); Beckham (Real Madrid), Keane (Manchester United), Totti (Roma), Nedved (Juventus), Giuly (Monaco); Inzaghi (Milan), Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna)

William Gallas scores a late winner for Chelsea in their opening Champions League group match against Sparta Prague

16/09/03

Ronaldo scores twice in Real Madrid's 4-2 win over Marseille

16/09/03

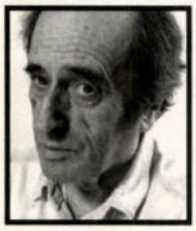
Deportivo La Coruna and AEK Athens draw 1-1 in Champions League Group C

17/09/03

Champions League debutants Sociedad beat Olympiakos 1-0

17/09/03

WS WORLD SOCCER Brian Glanville



...on Arsenal's indiscipline...Chelsea's embarrassment of riches...Beckham's family matters (continued)

AS A cultivated Frenchman, Arsene Wenger will be well aware of the French expression *'qui s'excuse s'accuse'* – he who excuses himself accuses himself. Seldom can it have been more appropriate than when he made misguided attempts to blame the media for the consequences of his players' shocking behaviour at the end of Arsenal's recent game at Manchester United.

"The FA has reacted to media reaction," he complained. "It is a Sky trial. Some guy with no responsibility to football decides what is shown."

He could, he said, charge the media with over-reaction. "We are guilty of over-reacting but you react like we've killed somebody."

Oh dear. How lamentable and contemptible of that director at BSkyB actually to keep his cameras filming what so repugnantly went on after Ruud Van Nistelrooy – named as the principal *agent provocateur* by Wenger – missed that late penalty. Martin Keown, leaping around with glee like a possessed gorilla, struck the Dutchman across the back of the head. Ray Parlour swung at him.

However culpable Van Nistelrooy may have been when he reacted to that flick of the foot by Patrick Vieira which missed him, his behaviour when attacked and abused by so many Arsenal players was exemplary. He simply bowed his head and did not react at all to appalling thuggery.

'The anomaly of Arsenal's loutish behaviour, contrasted with the civilised, educated, sophisticated character of their manager, has been hard to resolve'

Here, alas, we saw in its starkest form what has been wrong with Arsenal and their discipline almost throughout Wenger's seven years in office, during which time the team have collected the abysmal total of 52 red cards. Either the manager doesn't see, or he doesn't condemn. Either way he has never managed to get a grip on his players' behaviour, with the result that time and again – not least in the case of Sol Campbell and Vieira at the end of last season – he has lost key men for weeks on end to the detriment of results. It has been tempting at times to feel his ideal half-back line would consist of the Three Wise Monkeys.

The anomaly of such loutish behaviour, contrasted with the civilised, educated, sophisticated character of their manager, has been hard to resolve. It would be fatuous to suggest that Wenger would ever encourage violence. Perhaps his inability to restrain it may itself reside in his very urbanity.

It has also been pointed out that Manchester United in recent years have been anything but exemplary in their behaviour; the pictures of a snarling Roy Keane and his colleagues besieging hapless referee Andy D'Urso remain all too clearly in the mind.

But to give Alex Ferguson his due, he has fought the good fight and calmed things down. So much so that, for goodness' sake, Keane even emerged as a peacemaker in the Arsenal match!

Ferguson has a far more combustible temperament than Wenger, as David Beckham can tell you. Perhaps that is how and why he's found the force to make his team behave better.

WITH one bound, Roman was free. Or so he appears to be. Hardly had we heard the news that Roman Abramovich's former mentor and fellow 'oligarch', Boris Berezovsky, had escaped two assassination attempts with a poisoned pen in London, and been granted asylum in England, than it was announced that Abramovich had sold another of his enterprises for untold millions and that he was giving up his governorship of a vast, benighted province in Siberia. The latter has presumably served its purpose since it had enabled him to move his oil company Sibneft there, and thus reportedly avoid paying £500million in taxes.

Seeing the way things are going in Russia under Vladimir Putin's sinister regime, Abramovich has surely been wise to relocate to England.

But what of Chelsea, what of Claudio Ranieri? The irony is – but perhaps we should, historically, have expected it –

The 2003 Women's World Cup kicks off with Norway taking on France in Philadelphia

20/09/03

Juventus and Roma draw 2-2 in the match of the weekend in Italy

21/09/03

Arsenal's Patrick Vieira is sent off against Manchester United

21/09/03

that for all their colossal expenditure, Chelsea this season have been as inconsistent as ever. Held to a draw at Stamford Bridge by Blackburn, squeaking through 1-0 in Prague with a very late goal against Sparta, hugely lucky to beat Aston Villa, again at The Bridge – when Villa's Juan Pablo Angel threw away all those chances – then soundly beaten at home by Besiktas.

The trouble is surely an embarrassment of riches. All those glittering star players whom Abramovich has bought for the club enable Ranieri to indulge his compulsive tendency to chop, change and tinker more enthusiastically than ever. The temptation to do so must be immense, and it certainly hasn't been resisted.

Ranieri tries to justify it in one way or another, but the complaints of players such as Damien Duff and Frank Lampard have been significant; and it was notable how things changed for the better in the Villa game when Joe Cole came on for Juan Sebastian Veron – marooned again out wide on the right.

Alarmingly and outrageously, it appears that Abramovich wanted to send Cole out on loan to Moscow Spartak. He surely showed in the game against Villa how valuable he could and should be to the team. I still regret the fact that he, one of the few true young English talents, should have gone to Chelsea to be involved in this chaotic kaleidoscope of expensive players.

Who said that money isn't everything?

'I still regret that Joe Cole, one of the few true young English talents, has gone to Chelsea to be involved in this chaotic kaleidoscope of expensive players'

WHERE is the present Posh and Becks impasse going to end? Is Victoria, you may ask, now beginning to regret the way she won her possibly Pyrrhic victory against Alex Ferguson and Manchester United?

For now, David is in Madrid, while she wants him ideally – and ludicrously, if true – to commute from England, albeit by private jet.

Even if he wanted to, you could hardly imagine Real Madrid assenting. But if she has her way and stays with her parents together with the children, who clearly mean so much to him, how could he bear to stay in Madrid? That he has been seen enjoying the nightlife of the city in company with other Real Madrid players – the club seems oddly permissive about their players celebrating into the small hours – looks to me ultimately unimportant.

Beckham is a family man, and unless Victoria decided to move with their children to Madrid, it is difficult to imagine he would stay there.

Shades, perhaps, of what happened when Jimmy Greaves, reluctantly, it is true, joined Milan in 1961.

His wife Irene objected to being harassed in the streets by Italian men, and within a few months Greaves, after scoring nine goals for Milan in the *Campionato*, was back in London, playing for Spurs.

Read Brian Glanville's weekly column at www.worldsoccer.com

Notes & quotes

"Last summer everyone wanted David Beckham, but it is not in the genes of this club to have an Englishman here."

Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani explaining why the European champions signed Kaka ahead of the England captain.

"Human life is more important than a game of football."

Juventus boss Marcello Lippi on the death of Napoli fan Sergio Ercolano during clashes at a Serie B game at Avellino.

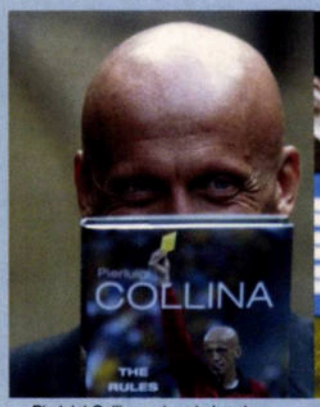
Straight to the point...Van Hooijdonk

"Without doubt we play great football, but we often take the most difficult route. When things aren't going so well, we have to play simpler."

Dutch striker Pierre Van Hooijdonk argues against Holland's preoccupation with style over substance.

"In Belgian football, Aruna does whatever he wants. Here, no one can stop him."

Westerlo coach Jan Ceulemans pays tribute to Anderlecht's impressive Ivory Coast attacker Aruna Dindane.



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24/09/03

WS WORLD SOCCER Paul Gardner

From football heroes to museum relics. Past masters lose their appeal as historical exhibits

COMING SOON! Maybe to somewhere near you…the Maradona Museum, cunningly called M10. A travelling show of some 600 relics and artefacts and photographs and television tapes and all manner of bits and pieces associated with Diego Maradona, the world's greatest player.

Not the greatest, you say? Never mind, he has as good a claim as anyone, and a pretty bizarre life off the field as well, so the exhibits shouldn't lack interest.

Here we have the very boots he wore when he scored that incredible goal against England in 1986. Then maybe there should be, right alongside, a plaster cast of that famous hand, that hand of God.

Yet, you know these adulatory showcases, it's all sunshine and roses. They never expose the darker side…or do they? How about this, from the Argentinian newspaper *Clarin*, revealing that in M10 "you'll also find videos of the more bitter moments of his life…including one of his 1991 arrest for drug-taking".

Reality intrudes again with the realisation that there is a gaping hole at the centre of the exhibits. Diego's 1986 World Cup winner's medal – and, surely, no player ever did more to earn such a medal – is missing, because it was stolen when he was playing for Napoli.

As it happens, I live just round the corner from one of the world's great museums, the American Natural History Museum, which I visit frequently. I once asked a young soccer player to come with me. He declined with a scathing: "It's all dead in there."

I suppose it is, and for the dinosaurs that's fine. But for sport? A sports museum is almost a contradiction in terms. Can the noise and the action, the excitement and the drama of the stadium ever be captured in a museum or a series of exhibits?

I don't think so. Of course, modern displays make full use of interactive technology, so there's plenty of action. But all those personal mementos are always there, and they're the ones I find so forlorn, even embarrassing.

A scruffy faded shirt, a crumpled pair of boots – is it really possible to conjure up the tingling thrill of a Garrincha or Maradona from things like that?

Hardly. Such relics invariably look faded and musty, they look old-fashioned. And that attribute is almost fatal for sports interest. Because, however you look at it, old-fashioned in sport always means…slow. I don't know of any sport that has got slower over the years. Speed is a major attraction, slowness a turn-off.

It is painful to watch film of my heroes, those fabulous 1970 Brazilians, and be forced to admit that the game looks slow. But that's the truth, and the more modern the museums get, the more action they can show, the more they underline that awkward fact.

'A faded shirt, a crumpled pair of boots – is it really possible to conjure up the thrill of a Garrincha or a Maradona from that?'

There is another problem with museums, too. Authenticity. I was in one of these soccer museums in 1987, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, venue of the USA's famous 1-0 win over England in the 1950 World Cup. There it was, nestling in its glass box, an ugly, out-of-shape leather mass…the very ball used in the game. Standing next to me was Wilf Mannion, who had been in the England team that day. "Just think, Wilf," I said. "You actually kicked that ball." He shook his head and replied: "In that game? I'm not sure I did!"

We laughed at the thought that he never got a kick. But in another sense what he said might have been 100 per cent true. In New York State, in the out-of-the-way town of Oneonta, they have a hall of fame and a museum devoted to the history of American soccer. I learned later that they, too, claim to have the original ball from the USA-England game.

So who's to vouch for the authenticity of the relics? Come to that – an even more anarchic thought – does authenticity matter anyway?

I'll leave you to ponder that while I return to Maradona and my favourite museum story. Actually, it's Maradona Senior, Diego's father. In 1985, the Argentina Under-17 team was in Beijing. Diego's younger brother, Hugo, was in the team and his parents were along for the trip. I had spent the morning with the team, going round the Museum of the Communist Revolution, which was, in effect, one enormous tribute to Mao Tse Tung – portraits, busts, clothes, artefacts, the lot.

As I wearily approached the exit, I spotted Maradona senior staring fixedly at a glass showcase containing an unidentified empty vessel. I stared at it, walked round it. No label of any sort. "What can that be?" I asked him. "That," he replied with an earthy chuckle, "is the pot that Mao pissed in."

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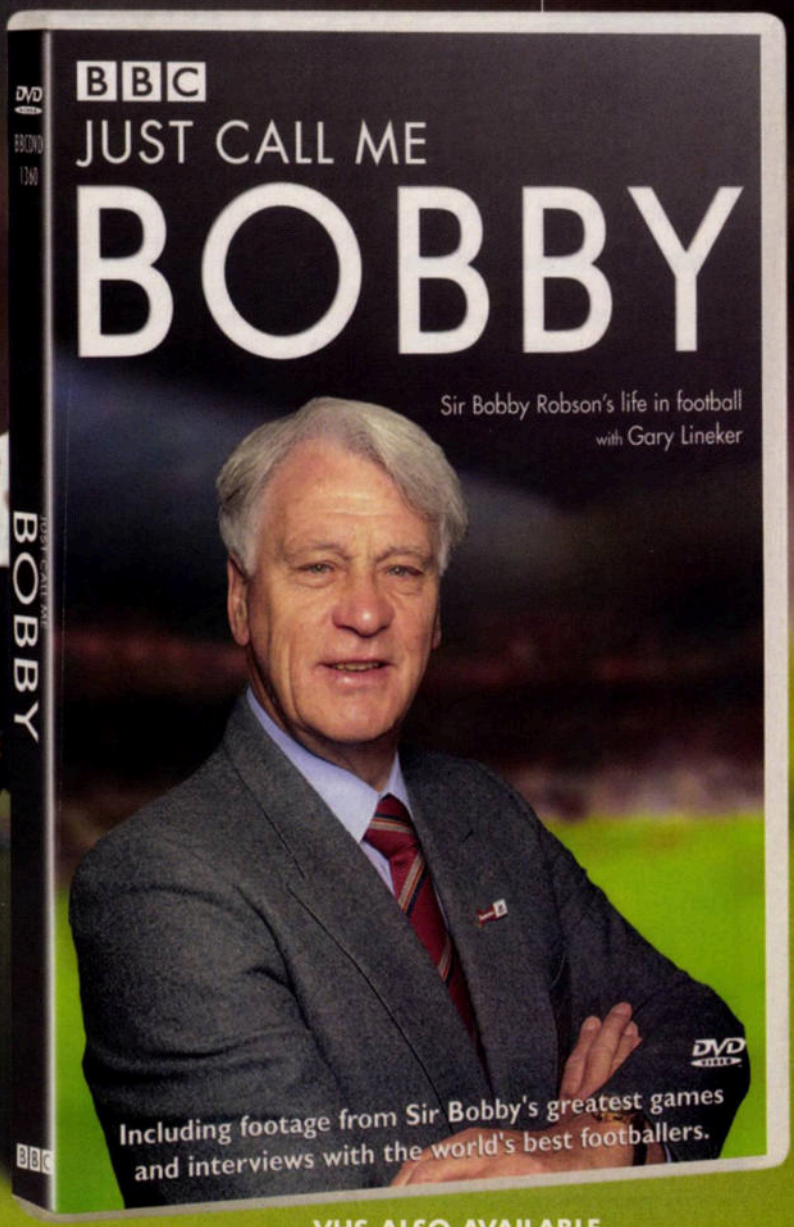

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WS WORLD SOCCER **Jim Holden**

Wenger, the Cantona of coaching

The Arsenal boss is still underachieving in Europe

WHEN THE FINEST managerial brains are summoned to UEFA headquarters every few months for a brainstorming session about the future of the game in Europe, an invitation is always sent to Arsene Wenger.

The Arsenal supremo is admired across the world of soccer as an intelligent, innovative, deep-thinking and thoroughly modern sporting man. He speaks six languages, his teams often play a dazzling brand of attacking football, and when his side confront Kyiv Dynamo later this month he will become only the sixth manager to have 60 Champions League games under his belt.

It is that final statistic, though, which exposes the greatest mystery of the European game. How can Wenger have gained so much Champions League experience and yet only once taken Arsenal to the quarter-final stage, and then no further?

All those coaches above him in the list have won the trophy. Yet the Frenchman's team continually flounder on the grandest club stage, the problem already evident again this season with a humiliating 3-0 home loss to Internazionale in the opening match followed by a lacklustre goalless draw away to Lokomotiv Moscow.

The repeated misery suggests a fundamental flaw in Wenger's approach.

Endless excuses have been dished up. Playing home games at Wembley in the early days was a favourite. It doesn't wash, however, not when Arsenal have failed to win any of their last six Champions League matches at Highbury.

Another excuse is the overloaded fixture schedule of the Premiership. More hogwash, I'm afraid. Arsenal's efforts in Europe are repeatedly ended by Spanish opponents, who also have 38 domestic fixtures, and in a far more demanding league.

If there is a negative effect of English football on Wenger's team it is the shockingly poor general standard of defending. It is all too easy for Thierry Henry and co to score goals in the Premiership, but when they face Valencia or Inter, the seemingly irresistible force is comprehensively halted by high-class defenders.

And there appears to be no alternative strategy for Arsenal once their normal pattern of play is stymied. When Wenger was asked last season what happens if Plan A fails to work, he responded with a genuine look of surprise. His faith in his system is absolute.

'How can he have gathered so much Champions League experience yet only once taken Arsenal to the quarter-finals?'

Here, I believe, lies the heart of Arsenal's malaise in the Champions League – a strangely blinkered approach to the crucial issue of tactics from the boss. Sure, Arsenal's attacking play at its best is a marvel. The test for Wenger now is to modify his team so they can conquer Europe's great clubs as well as pummel the makeweights. It is a huge test – one that will define his place in football history.

For the moment, the career of Wenger brings a clear comparison with his compatriot Eric Cantona, a player who sparkled in the Premiership with Manchester United but failed dismally to impose his talent and character on the more rarefied heights of soccer's greatest club competition.

Only a fool would say that Cantona was not crucial to United's rise to dominance in English football or fail to credit Wenger with a similar role at Highbury. Yet the stark truth remains that United could not achieve their greatest prize, the Champions League trophy, until Cantona had departed Old Trafford. You have to wonder whether the same will be true of Wenger and Arsenal when the final analysis is made.

● *Wenger Q&A, page 32.*

MOST GAMES AS MANAGER IN THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

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Valencia and Depor show the 'Big Two' label no longer applies to La Liga

THE PROBLEM WITH Spanish football is that it's so uncompetitive, so predictable. It's always the same two clubs dominating everything. Just look at the League table: at the time of writing, six games into the season, there they are as normal, sitting arrogantly in first and second place with 10 wins, one draw and one defeat between them.

It's the same old story: over the past four years, the usual suspects together boast two League championships, two runners-up medals and a couple of third-place finishes, as well as three Spanish Supercups and a pair of European Cup Finals. Plus two Spanish Copa del Rey trophies, two *Pichichi* awards (for top scorer) and two Zamora gongs (for best goalkeeper). No wonder people never cease moaning about Spain's duopoly.

Except that the behemoths in question are not Real Madrid and Barcelona. They are, of course, Valencia and Deportivo La Coruna.

It would be pushing it to ignore the galaxy of stars parading in the capital or to completely write off Barcelona, despite them having won nothing and barely challenged since their 1998-99 title success. Yet, out on the pitch, you can forget the Big Two duopoly.

Sure, the Madrid-Barça game remains *the* match in Spain, charged with an inimitable significance; sure, virtually everybody has a preference for one or the other; sure, their rivalry defines much of Spanish football. But the Big Two moniker simply no

We're the governors...Curro Torres gives Luis Figo an uncomfortable time during Valencia's 2-0 win over Real Madrid at Mestalla

● With Jaime Pacheco sacked by Mallorca, the coaching axe could next fall on Espanyol's Javier Clemente. Not that he is worried. Asked if his 'credit' was running out after Espanyol lost 2-1 at the Bernabeu, he retorted: "All I know about credit is that dodgy, cheap advert on Tele5, the one where you phone and they give you €3,000 in 24 hours..."

In the black?...Clemente

longer applies, even though Barça, Madrid and the media are too often guilty of acting as if it does. Anyway, Valencia and Depor have usurped Barcelona. They, as the Spanish put it, are no one-day flowers. If last year's runners-up Real Sociedad need another season or so to prove their challenge is permanent, Depor and Valencia have already done so.

That ever-more established place at the summit has, naturally, fuelled new rivalries and new animosity, aggravated in part by the refusal of the pro-Barça and pro-Madrid press – the semi-official mouthpieces of the traditional Big Two – to recognise the claims of the new pretenders. Once upon a time, Real Madrid were warmly received in Valencia and La Coruna. Not now.

In the week before Madrid's recent visit to Valencia, a group of 'fans' broke into Mestalla and set fire to the away bench. It was a warning, a taste of what would await their opponents.

'Arrogant' Madrid

The animosity is also, importantly, sparked by what Valencia fans see as Madrid's arrogance, embodied by their ubiquitous centenary and, especially, their transfer activity. First, they 'stole' Predrag Mijatovic, then they snooped round Gaizka Mendieta, and finally, this summer, they came for Roberto Ayala, aggravating a simmering contract argument between him and the club – and, according to president Jaime Orti, ultimately costing Valencia £500,000 more on the Argentinian's yearly deal.

That just adds to media bias, cries of foul play, missiles, growing *anti-Madridismo* everywhere, the alleged political favouritism enjoyed by Madrid, and tensions made worse by a national Partido Popular government with little time for regional nationalism.

Together these factors – with Madrid's 'unsettling' of other clubs' players the most important – help create a supercharged atmosphere.

Of course it matters that they are serious rivals in football terms, too. And, helped along by a roaring Mestalla, Valencia underlined their challenge with a convincing 2-0 victory. Mista scored after five minutes and for the first half-hour Madrid were torn apart, until the fleet-footed Pablo Aimar, who has started the season superbly, went off with a thigh injury.

Without the Argentinian, Valencia's movement became predictable but they stayed strong, and Ricardo Oliveira's goal was well deserved. Ruben Baraja and David Albelda dominated midfield, while Jorge Lopez was too clever for Roberto Carlos. The defence was typically solid, with veteran left-back Amedeo Carboni continuing to defy the ageing process. Valencia are starting to recover the qualities of the interlocking side that won the League two seasons ago.

The victory over Madrid took Valencia top, a position they retained the following week with a 1-0 victory in Barcelona. Again without Aimar, they were still too well-organised and powerful. Oliveira's crashing finish stretched their winning run to five games and all without conceding a goal.

So Rafa Benitez's side are looking like title contenders again, which is surprising given their problems – massive debt, unhappy players, conflict between coach and sporting director, and the declining popularity of Orti. On the pitch, though, it's so far, so good, and their failure to qualify for the Champions League could be a blessing in disguise. Just one major doubt remains: the *Ches* lack a really prolific striker.

By contrast, second-placed Depor – whose own, less explosive rivalry with Madrid was reinforced by their Copa del Rey success at the Bernabeu on Madrid's 100th birthday – have goalscorers coming out of their ears. With last year's Golden Shoe winner Roy Makaay now at Bayern and Albert Luque, Pedro Munitis and Diego Tristan left out or playing wide, the goals have been left to Uruguayan Walter Pandiani, aided by the understated creativity of Juan Carlos Valeron.

Against Atletico Madrid, Pandiani made it six consecutive League games with a goal (eight in eight, including the Champions League), as Depor won 5-1. If he were to repeat that against Barcelona, he would become the first player to score in the opening seven games for over 20 years, and one of only four to have ever done so. Already level with Rivaldo and Makaay, one more would see him equal Bebeto's club consecutive-game record.

Irureta's way

Depor coach Javier Irureta's system-over-stars approach may rile many players, but something is definitely being done right. Depor have lost just once – thanks to five minutes of madness during which they conceded three against Osasuna – and have scored 15. They have two players for virtually every position, rotate seamlessly and have added much-needed pace at the back with the fit-again Jorge Andrade. On song, they are Spain's most fluid performers, though occasionally Irureta appears over-cautious.

Momentary lapses of mental toughness have also tended to cost them, especially in the Champions League – where they invariably fall in the quarter-finals. Nor is it clear how Irureta could effectively replace the immense but ageing Mauro Silva, should he get injured.

But for all the question marks and potential pitfalls, and despite the frightening quality of Real Madrid, Valencia and Depor deserve the benefit of the doubt.

After all, these days seeing them top isn't even a surprise.

'Once, Real were warmly welcomed in Valencia and La Coruna. Not now'

United in grief...Napoli (white) and Verona players observe a minute's silence in memory of Sergio Ercolano

Armed and dangerous

The death of a Napoli supporter raises fresh fears about the hooligan threat

PADDY AGNEW in Rome

NOT FOR THE first time, grizzly off-the-field events have stolen the Italian 'limelight'. The death of 19-year-old Napoli fan Sergio Ercolano following violent incidents at their Serie B derby at Avellino on September 20 again pointed the finger at the shortcomings of football's ruling elite.

The trouble at this keenly-awaited game began 35 minutes before kick-off, when seven busloads of Napoli fans, many of them without tickets, arrived outside Avellino's Partenio stadium. Within minutes, street warfare had broken out as they attempted to break through police lines in order to gain access to the stadium.

According to subsequent reports, police on duty outside the *Curva Nord* end soon found themselves attacked from both front and rear with the newly-arrived Napoli fans being helped by their 'brethren' already inside. Such was the ferocity of the fighting that the police were forced to retreat and regroup, abandoning a gate through which the fans then gained access to the ground.

In the confusion, one group of ticketless fans took a shortcut, scaling a low wall and then jumping 10 feet on to a plastic roof and from there on down into the stadium proper. Ercolano was the unlucky one. When he jumped from the wall, the roof gave way and he fell a further 30 feet, suffering ultimately fatal injuries.

At this point, an ambulance was summoned. However, in the confusion, police and paramedics found it difficult to identify exactly where Ercolano had fallen. He had in fact ended up in a corridor leading to a public gym always locked on match days.

Furious at the delayed arrival of the ambulance, a small section of Napoli fans burst on to the pitch, driving the hopelessly outnumbered police ahead of them. In the end, the police were

forced to scamper down the tunnel leading to the underground dressing-rooms, pulling the overhead door shut behind them.

All this latter rampage was picked up by the TV cameras and viewed and reviewed many times on national television. In particular, it was noted how many of the fans were armed with bars and pipes and wearing woollen balaclavas. More than one commentator also highlighted how they surrounded one portly and not very mobile policeman, beating him with bars. In the end, 28 officers were treated for minor injuries.

More than two weeks later, 16 fans were arrested as the result of a joint operation by Avellino and Naples police. They have been charged with offences ranging from violence and resisting arrest to damaging public property. It was estimated that more than £60,000-worth of damage had been done to the Partenio stadium.

Inevitably, the destructive rampage only increased the misery of the night because, when the match was finally suspended by referee Luca Palanca, after consultation with both police and Football League, it was impossible to inform those spectators still waiting because the public address system had been knocked out of action.

'Cowardly aggression'

While the Ercolano family mourns, Italian football is yet again left with more questions than answers. For instance, how were busloads of Napoli fans allowed to travel to the game without tickets?

Avellino police chief Vincenzo Raimo declared: "This was part of a pre-arranged criminal plan, nothing spontaneous about it. The idea was to get about 1,000 spectators without tickets into the ground and the only way to guarantee that was to create that chaos. It was a cowardly act of aggression. They even took advantage of the moment that the poor boy had fallen in order to hit us harder..."

To some extent, the police investigation would appear to have answered a question being asked by just about everybody in the aftermath of the match. Namely, what sort of 'fan' goes to a football match armed with bars and sticks? Or equipped with a woollen balaclava, even though the temperature on the night was about 25 degrees?

At least two other serious questions emerged from the Avellino riots. Firstly, did Napoli football club make a serious effort to stop their ticketless fans travelling? Or, as club president Salvatore Naldi appeared to indicate, are large clubs like Napoli potential hostages to blackmail from hardline 'ultra' fans who are willing to travel?

Even more worrying is the possibility that this latest incident may be linked to a systematic attempt by right-wing extremist groups to infiltrate Italian fans, highlighted twice this year by the secret services.

It may well be that the Napoli fan base finds supporters in the alienated, economically deprived youth of the city. The fact that five of the 16 arrested already had criminal records suggests the problems of the club are not unrelated to those of the city.

In the aftermath, however, one thing appears clear. Violence in Italian football is on the increase, with statistics showing that there were violent incidents at 250 games in the 2002-03 season as opposed to 195 games the previous year.

Has the time come for Italian football's ruling classes to sit down and seriously rethink? Are not many of Italy's stadiums simply prehistoric, ugly cement monsters where, treated like animals, the fans begin to behave like animals too? Has the time not come to invest in user-friendly, family and corporation-oriented stadiums that put the accent on style and sophistication?

● Gianluca Zambrotta seemed to admit he had dived in winning the late penalty that earned Juventus a fortuitous 2-1 home win against Bologna. He said: "I was tackled and banged into and I exaggerated my fall. I could have been booked."

The moralists had a field day, inevitably denouncing the cynicism of 'modern' football.

But it was hard to disagree with Reggina coach Franco Colomba, who said: "Let us not be false moralists – for the sake of winning, players will always use cunning."

Taking the fall...Zambrotta

Cuper blunder

Another issue sure to run all season, too, is the indifferent form shown by Internazionale. Those Inter fans who, in the wake of a comprehensive 3-0 Champions League win against Arsenal at Highbury, had begun to dream of glory days ahead woke up to an ugly reality when their disjointed, unconvincing team were trounced 3-1 by Milan in the first derby of the season.

Milan's win owed much to the brilliant form of such as Ukraine striker Andrii Shevchenko and Brazilian new boy Kaka, but it was also helped by another classic blunder by Inter's Argentinian coach Hector Cuper. Having made bellicose eve-of-battle noises, even declaring Inter would win 2-0, Cuper appeared to panic when things went against his side in the opening half-hour.

Forgetting his swashbuckling, pre-match bravado, he reverted to type and after 36 minutes pulled off attacking midfielder Andy Van der Meyde, replacing him with defender Thomas Helveg. It was almost as if Cuper was already waving the white flag.

His decision to start with Sierra Leone striker Mohamed Kallon rather than Obafemi Martins or Alvaro Recoba also provoked gloomy pre-match analysis. Player choices aside, however, we were left looking at a familiar Inter failing under Cuper.

The poor performance and the fact that usually affable owner Massimo Moratti left the San Siro looking distinctly unhappy and refusing to speak to reporters prompted speculation that, this time, Cuper might be on his way out. However, after a night of reflection, Moratti opted to stick with the status quo, making it very clear however that come next May Cuper will be out of a job unless Inter have some serious new silverware on the sideboard.

'What sort of fan goes to a match equipped with bars and sticks?'

Simak goes missing

NICK BIDWELL in Dortmund

The fragile Czech midfielder can't take the professional pressure

EVEN LONG-RUNNING German TV detective Inspector Derrick would have been hard-pressed to solve the recent case of missing Hannover midfielder Jan Simak.

The 24-year-old Czech international, on loan this season from Bayer Leverkusen, disappeared for a week in late September, leaving neither family, friends nor club the slightest inkling of his whereabouts.

As reporters attempted frenziedly to locate him, reasons for his vanishing act abounded. Agent Christoph Leutrum spoke of the "periods of depression" to which his client was prone, while various media reports had him sulking following a split from his girlfriend, suffering a nervous breakdown or contemplating life away from football as an owner of a bistro in Bohemia.

An agitated and emotional Simak was eventually tracked down to Prague by Leutrum and persuaded to return to Germany. After a check-up, he was diagnosed as suffering from nervous exhaustion and depression.

Simak insists he wants to quit, saying: "Mentally and physically I'm not in a state to deal with the pressures of pro football."

Leverkusen are more hopeful, though. "Jan is ill and we have to help him as a human being," said managing director Reiner Calmund. "Contract matters do not come into it at the moment."

That Simak's career is now on hold will not have surprised anyone who has crossed his path. Although a highly-gifted playmaker and goalscorer, a tendency to flout discipline both on and off the pitch has left his finger tantalisingly close to the self-destruct button. Nor has confidence been Simak's strongest suit. He displayed precious little self-belief after leaving Hannover for Leverkusen in a £5 million deal in summer 2002. Bought to fill the boots of Bayern Munich-bound Michael Ballack, he rarely lived up to expectations and spent most of the second half of the season on the bench.

"I worried about playing in a Leverkusen side in which there were World Cup finalists such as Lucio, Schneider, Neuville and Ramelow," he said in a revealing moment last year. "They are gods, I'm nothing. The problem is in my head."

Another player under stress is keeper Oliver Kahn, who was widely blamed as Bayern Munich conceded a hatful of goals in 3-3 draws in Hannover and at home to Leverkusen and a 3-2 defeat at Wolfsburg.

For some, Kahn's fallibility was not merely caused by a mystery eye infection which sporadically blurred his vision this autumn, a condition that has now been successfully treated. Some believe his reflexes are not as sharp as they were, that the once-obsessive perfectionist is now addicted only to the good life.

Needless to say, Kahn came out fighting. "Some try to give the impression that I'm permanently partying, drinking and smoking," he said. "I have a drink at the *Oktoberfest* [Munich's annual beer festival] and the message is that I was there all night. I take my sport very, very seriously. I'm working as hard as ever on the training ground, in the gym, lots of long runs in the forest, lots of exercises. My programme is as tough as ever.

"At the moment, luck is not on my side. Shots are going in off the post or are perfectly aimed for the top corner. I'm being attacked for not stopping the unstoppable. I accept one per cent of the criticism but not the remainder, which comes from people with no idea about goalkeeping."

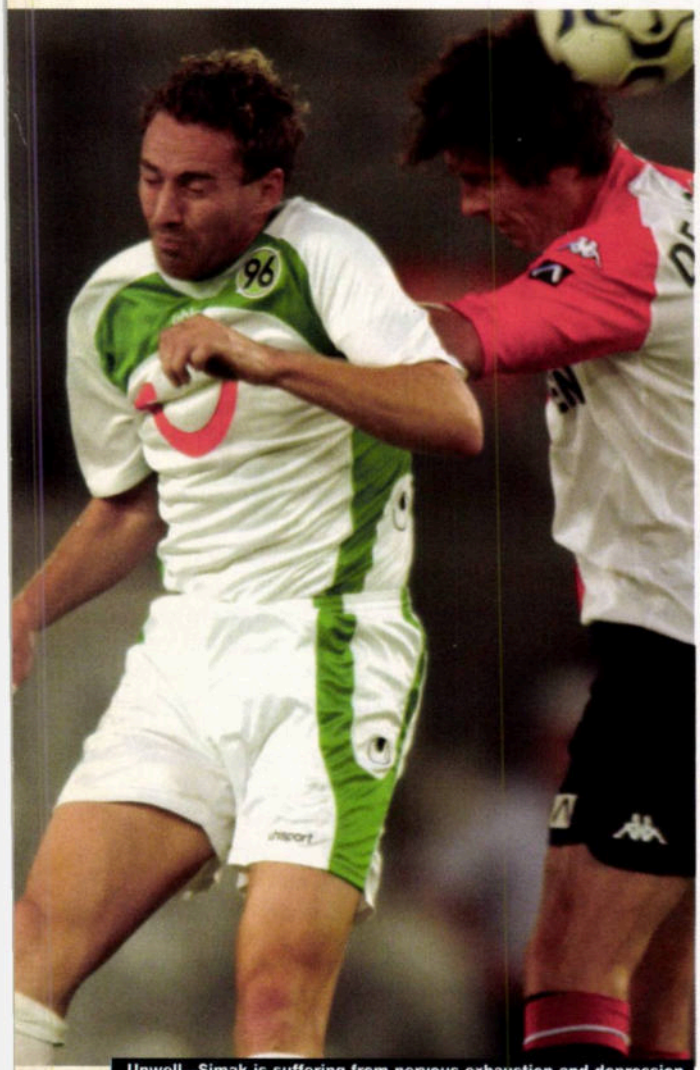
'Bayer's World Cup finalists are gods, I'm nothing. The problem is in my head'

Jan Simak

Meanwhile at Bayern's arch-rivals Dortmund, the board's proposal to slash wages by a fifth in the wake of their failure to qualify for the Champions League was finally accepted by the entire first-team squad. At first, the club's Brazilian contingent wanted to resist. But after hours of talks between the players' agents and chief executive Michael Meier, the club received the unanimous response they had hoped for.

"It is remarkable," said relieved president Gerd Niebaum. "It shows our professionals don't just have a nine-to-five mentality."

And at least the Dortmund players have decent salaries to bank. The same cannot be said of sacked Borussia Monchengladbach boss Ewald Lienen, the first coaching casualty of the season. The new hand on the tiller belongs to former national team midfielder Holger Fach, who quit his job with Third Division Rot-Weiss Essen to return to the club where he once played and coached the youth team.



Unwell...Simak is suffering from nervous exhaustion and depression

ERIK BIELDERMAN in Marseille

War on Monaco

Clubs demand action over the League leaders' tax perks

FOR YEARS NOBODY complained about Monaco's special tax status in French football. Now, the peace has been well and truly broken.

The presidents of champions Lyon (Jean-Michel Aulas), Marseille (Christophe Bouchet) and Lens (Gervais Martel) have declared war on Monaco. The reason? Monaco are the only club in France who can recruit foreign players without having to pay income tax on their wages. So it's easy for a player to earn two or even three times as much money by signing for the Principality club, compared to other First Division outfits.

Since 1963, tax-free salaries have been offered to non-French citizens living in Monaco. This was agreed between the French and Monaco governments and is not going to be renegotiated. Until now, the world of football took no notice. Before the Bosman ruling, only two (later three) foreign players were allowed at the same team so the advantage for Monaco was negligible. Now, under Bosman, Monaco can buy as many foreign players as they want.

To give an example of the benefits that the club enjoy, consider this example. If a non-French player signs for Monaco and receives a net salary of €1million it will cost the club €1.54m after paying non-income taxes. If the same player signs for Lyon for the same salary, it will cost them €4.16m.

It's a situation other club chairmen are not happy with. Aulas says: "Monaco aren't playing by the same rules as the rest of us. We have to question the legitimacy of their belonging to the French League."

Monaco is an independent state, after all, but Aulas insists: "If the same tax rules are not applied to Monaco, then Monaco should not compete in European competition as a French team. If Monaco finish in the top three in our League, the fourth-placed team should qualify for Europe. Monaco should compete in Europe as a representative of the state of Monaco. We have to discuss this issue with UEFA.

"Another option is to ask Monaco to pay an entry fee into the French League that would be comparable to the tax advantages they gain from their status."

Responding to this violent attack, new Monaco president Pierre Svara said: "Monsieur Aulas and his partners have never complained about Monaco's position before. Is it a way to undermine and cause trouble inside our club because we are doing so well?" (Monaco made a bright start to the Champions League with wins over PSV Eindhoven and AEK Athens and were top of the domestic League after nine rounds.)

Svara added that French players make up more than 50 per cent of the Monaco team – compared to Marseille, who faced Austria Wien in a Champions League third qualifying round tie with no French player in the starting XI.

The motivation behind this strong attack by Aulas and his friends was to try to provoke the French government into action. Aulas said: "We should harmonise our tax rules relating to players from other countries, or at least offer clubs a discount on the social taxes on wages."

That proposal provoked a strong reaction from sports daily *L'Equipe*. "This is an attempt to obtain from the state a special status for professional footballers. Such a privilege would be very negatively received in a difficult social and economic situation. We can understand that French clubs want to have equal treatment for the 20 belonging to our Premier League, but how can we justify footballers being better off from French taxes than any other French citizen. You and me. The French state must intervene, blow the final whistle and ensure equal treatment for all."

A recent poll of top division chairmen organised by *L'Equipe* showed that 40 per cent support the fight against Monaco, 20 per cent were in doubt, and 40 per cent backed Monaco. It's hard to see how a gentlemen's agreement can be reached in the forthcoming weeks. But it seems at some stage that Monaco will be made to pay.

Cheap at the price...Monaco do not have to pay income tax on the wages of foreigners such as Fernando Morientes

'We have to question the legitimacy of Monaco being in the French League'

Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas

Points win prizes

BRIAN HOMEWOOD
in Rio de Janeiro

Big clubs are using disciplinary tribunals to claw back lost ground in the championship

THE BRAZILIAN CHAMPIONSHIP has reached the two-thirds mark, which means it is time for the Big Carpet to come into play.

The Big Carpet, or *Tapetao* as it is known locally, is one of those delightful Brazilian football rituals in which clubs attempt to make up for losing points on the field by winning them back in the boardrooms.

So far, Brazil's disciplinary tribunal has redistributed the points from four matches after clubs were found guilty of fielding ineligible players.

Earlier in the competition, Ponte Preta were stripped of the points from their 1-1 draw with Internacional and 1-0 win over Juventude after their opponents complained that one of their players – Roberto – was ineligible. More recently, Paysandu lost the four points from a 2-2 draw with Corinthians and a 3-2 win over Fluminense after the tribunal ruled three players – Borges Neto, Aldrovani and Junior Amorim – had all been fielded when ineligible.

No problem there, it would seem, as this happens all over the world. But Brazilian directors always seem to take perverse pleasure in adding spice to things. Two little twists in the two cases threatened to plunge the whole competition into the usual chaos.

Firstly, there was the unusual practice of not just deducting points from the offending parties but then re-awarding them to their opponents. This meant that Internacional and Corinthians were the lucky winners of two extra points while Ponte Preta managed to recover three of the four they had lost.

Secondly, and even more strangely, all the players involved had duly been registered for the competition by the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF).

If anyone is wondering how they could therefore possibly be ineligible, don't worry because thousands of Brazilians have been asking the same

Controversial presence...the appearance of 'ineligible' Roberto (left) in the draw against Internacional cost Ponte Preta a point

question. Apparently, the CBF's technical department made a mistake, and it's the clubs who have to pay. That, it seems, is the way of things.

Outspoken commentator Juca Kfouri suggested the confusion was deliberate. He argued that deducting points from unfashionable teams such as Paysandu would push them towards the relegation zone and help big-team strugglers such as Gremio and Fluminense escape the drop. "In whose interests is it to allow such confusion? Will the CBF be punished by the same tribunal for being an accomplice to the mistake?" he asked.

CBF leak

Kfouri pointed out that the situation of the Paysandu trio – ruled ineligible because club president Arthur Tourinho was serving a 120-day ban when he signed them on loan – had come to light only after it was leaked to the media by a CBF employee. "How did the CBF accept the contracts of three players if they were signed by someone who couldn't do so?" he wrote. "Wouldn't it have been easier to nip the problem in the bud by rejecting the contracts?"

But, as Kfouri says, this way of doing things encourages teams to look for possible irregularities in their opponents. At the time of writing, at least five clubs were knocking on the door of the disciplinary tribunal to complain that Goias had fielded striker Grafite when he had been ineligible. The claim was that he had been loaned by Gremio to a club in South Korea and then re-loaned to Goias without Gremio's approval.

Some of the arguments used are almost comical. After crashing to a 6-1 defeat by Juventude, Corinthians then pondered appealing for the three points because one of the Juventude players had sat on the substitutes' bench wearing a different shirt number to the one he had been ascribed on the official team sheet.

It would be a huge shame if this year's championship were to descend into bedlam as it had all started out so promisingly. Brazil had for the first time organised its First Division along conventional league format lines. But the competition – which runs from March to December – imploded in June and July when European clubs bought up the best players and a number of teams disintegrated.

More recently, the possibility of Cruzeiro running away with the title with several rounds to spare prompted Globo television director Marcelo Campos Pinto to launch an astonishing attack on the league system, claiming it was "weird".

One of his key lines of argument was that major clubs such as Flamengo and Corinthians, who are stuck in mid-table, no longer have a stab at the title (doubtless, adversely affecting viewing figures). In previous years, when the top eight went into a knockout phase, they would still be in with a shout.

Yet Globo itself does a huge disservice to domestic football with policies that make no attempt to build up interest in the championship as a whole. Globo's coverage consists exclusively of showing Rio de Janeiro teams (or Sao Paulo teams to viewers in Sao Paulo) in action. As soon as the match finishes, the network goes straight to its Sunday evening game/talent/variety show. There are no highlights, no analysis, nothing that allows supporters to know what is really going on beyond their own doorstep.

Goal flashes are shown at half-time and scattered throughout subsequent programmes, for those who can stomach them, but are so quick there is barely time to read the inevitable "I love Jesus" messages on the players' T-shirts, let alone identify the players involved in the move.

Viewers unable to afford pay-per-view television – in other words, 99 per cent of the population – have barely seen leaders Cruzeiro in action this year and they will certainly not have had a look at provincial upstarts such as Coritiba or Criciuma.

Cruzeiro well clear

With 13 of the 46 rounds of matches to go, Cruzeiro had opened up an eight-point lead over defending champions Santos.

The two teams were neck and neck until they met in round 31. Cruzeiro won the game 3-0 helped by two goals from Colombian striker Victor Aristizabal and some dubious refereeing from Heber Lopes. In five crucial minutes in the second half, Lopes failed to send off Cruzeiro midfielder Claudio Maldonado for a criminal tackle then, following a tussle between Cruzeiro's Wendell and Santos' Fabiano, showed a red to the latter and yellow to the former when the reverse would have been correct. Chaos followed on the touchline as Santos coach Emerson Leao was sent off for leaving his designated area, but refused to move.

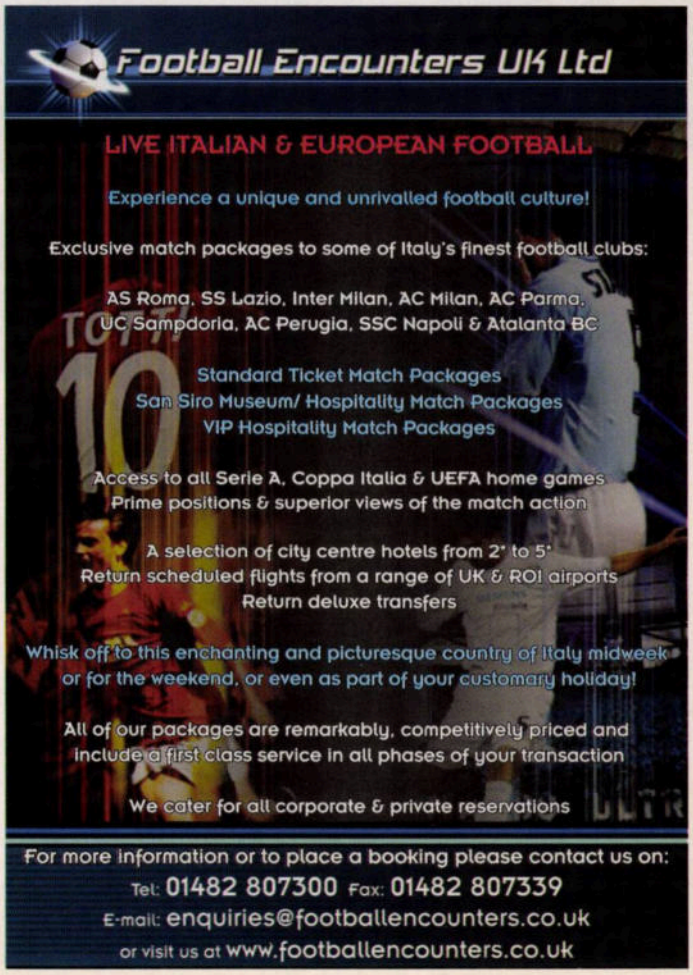
His behaviour led to a brawl involving all the usual suspects – police, club directors, radio reporters, cameramen and general hangers-on. While all that was going on, Cruzeiro, leading 1-0 from an early penalty, scored two quick goals and made off with the points.

The real violence, however, followed Vasco da Gama's match at home to Coritiba. Local hooligans invaded the Coritiba team bus, punched the players and dragged one of them off the vehicle for a further beating.

This happened outside the same Sao Januario stadium that escaped without sanctions after a fence collapsed during the one-off Joao Havelange Cup Final in 2000 because, by all accounts, an over-capacity 40,000 crowd had been stuffed inside.

This time only 475 people paid to watch. But the perpetrators were almost certainly from among the 600-odd members of the organised supporters group *Torcida Jovem* whom club president Eurico Miranda allows in for free. Miranda himself blamed the police for the incident, saying they had left the stadium as soon as the final whistle had gone.

'The federation made a mistake, but it's the clubs who have to pay'



Injury time...a Boca fan nurses a head wound suffered during the clashes with Chacarita supporters in late August

Same old story

ERIC WEIL
in Buenos Aires

Hooliganism still plagues the domestic game

HOOLIGAN VIOLENCE CONTINUES to plague the game here. Like the remake of an old film, the plot remains the same, with just a few minor changes to the script.

After the most recent serious incident – fighting between fans of Boca Juniors and Chacarita Juniors on August 31 – League games were suspended for 26 days and an investigation launched into the poor police handling of the situation.

Boca, the home side, had been leading 2-0 when the match was abandoned with 21 minutes left. They were awarded the points, and Chacarita ultimately had three points deducted, plunging them into the relegation zone.

The decision to suspend the League was effectively forced upon the FA after a judge, Mariano Berges, issued an order temporarily preventing the Buenos Aires police from attending matches.

Berges also issued arrest warrants for over 100 hooligans. Fifty were caught, but only half of those were still being detained at press time. Five high-ranking police officers were indicted following the investigation into the handling of the game. In addition, Berges demanded the

'1,100 officers policed the Boca Juniors-Racing Club game alone'

addresses of all club officials from the FA to allow him to investigate their (well-known) relations with their club's hooligan fans.

Velez Sarsfield president Raul Gamez, a former leader of his club's hooligan gang, admitted giving them free tickets and transport to away games to keep them contented, but he also suggested only home fans should be allowed into games. The judge said he liked the idea but it has previously proved unworkable.

Jose Vignati, president of Colon Santa Fe, said that his club's officials had nothing to do with the hooligans, but that the players give them money to avoid threats against themselves and their families. "You cannot blame the players while nothing is being done to do away with the gangs," he said.

Meanwhile, Javier Castrilli, the former referee who now heads the government's sports security committee, has ordered tough measures. He asked the FA to deduct 15 points from clubs whose fans cause trouble, a request the FA eventually managed to reduce to nine points.

However, the players' union immediately protested and there was even talk of strike action. "Why should players be punished for something they have not done?" asked secretary Sergio Marchi. "The championship could be decided by a committee instead of on the field, players would lose bonus payments and even their jobs if the club were thus relegated."

● Diego Maradona may now live in Cuba, but he has not been forgotten by his compatriots. A wine merchant from Mendoza is selling a wine with the Diego Armando Maradona brand name, while the year-old Maradonian Church, a sect based in Rosario, continues to worship 'Saint Diego'. The 'church' celebrates 'Christmas' on October 30 – Maradona's birthday – and 'Easter' on June 22, the day he scored his two goals against England at the 1986 World Cup.

FA president Julio Grondona retorted: "The players have no right to use strong-arm tactics. Players are not going to lose their jobs. They are privileged as they always get paid in spite of being in a bankrupt country."

Play resumes

The opening championship restarted on September 26 with stringent security measures in place. Fans entering stadiums were subject to random breathalyser and fingerprint tests. The 10 top division games were covered by 5,380 police, with 1,100 alone at the Boca-Racing Club *classico*. Judging by previous experience, none of these measures is likely to last.

The hooligan gangs mostly stayed away, and only one person was arrested – Chacarita vice-president Armando Capriotti, because testimony of jailed hooligans had pointed to his connection with them. But notorious club president Luis Barrionuevo could not be detained as he has immunity as a member of Congress.

Back on the pitch, Boca Juniors beat Racing Club 4-1 to make it five wins in a row and their best start to a championship since the introduction of opening and closing tournaments in 1991. Boca had a four-point lead, with a game in hand, over Newell's Old Boys and newly-promoted Atletico Rafaela.

Boca will have a chance of winning three trophies within 10 days if they reach the Sudamericana Cup Final, scheduled for December 17. They play their final domestic League game on the weekend of December 6/7 and face Milan in the World Club Cup on December 14.

However, Boca may have to do without the magnificent Carlos Tevez for some crucial weeks since he is due to play in the delayed Under-20 World Youth Cup in the United Arab Emirates at the end of November and start of December.

A tug-of-war for the 19-year-old is likely to ensue. The FA has the right to suspend players who refuse international call-ups, but it has never put this into practice and is likely to allow Boca to retain Tevez. However, this could open the floodgates for other clubs who do not want to release players. San Lorenzo, for example, have five players in the Under-20 squad. If they reach the Sudamericana Final, they will have almost as heavy a programme as Boca and will surely try to keep hold of their players.

River Plate were in the unusually low League position of 13th, having won just once in six games. Against Quilmes, they fought back from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 but could not find a winning goal despite Quilmes having been reduced to eight men with 20 minutes to go.

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Doubling up

PAUL GARDNER
in New York

MLS strikes deals with two new investors

AFTER VAINLY SEARCHING for over four years for new investors, Major League Soccer has finally found two: Stan Kroenke and Jorge Vergara.

Like MLS's major backer, Phil Anschutz, Kroenke is from Colorado, and also like Anschutz seriously wealthy and not previously known for an interest in football. He is, though, already into other sports, with his Kroenke Sports Enterprises (KSE) owning several teams in Denver, including the Nuggets (basketball) and the Avalanche (ice hockey).

Now add to that list MLS's Colorado Rapids – a team that (almost inevitably!) was formerly run by Anschutz. For MLS, Kroenke is an ideal investor because all his sports teams are based in Denver, including the Rapids, which KSE is already running. Kroenke thus carries weight in the local community. Exactly what is required for a League that is trying to build up a fan base in each of its franchised cities.

Kroenke is interested in building a soccer-specific stadium for the Rapids, who at the moment are playing in a gridiron football stadium that, while it is only two years old, is much too big: for Rapids games only 27,000 of its 76,000 seats are made available.

"Right now, there are a number of factors in our favour," says MLS deputy commissioner Ivan Gazidis. "The success of our two new soccer stadiums – in Columbus, and the Home Depot Center in Los Angeles – has shown that if you have the right set of circumstances the game can be successful, and financially successful."

So the push is on for more soccer stadiums. Dallas Burn, currently playing on a tiny high school ground, are scheduled to get a new stadium in 2005. The Anschutz Entertainment Group is negotiating to build three stadiums – for DC United, Chicago Sting and New York/New Jersey MetroStars.

"We get more of a benefit from our own stadiums than other American sports do," says Gazidis. "If we borrow stadiums, we often are forced to play on artificial turf, we have to suffer the gridiron markings on the field, and often the fields are too narrow. All that affects the quality of our game, and can be particularly damaging to how we present it."

Gazidis reports there is further good news waiting to happen, with "productive discussions" going on with two more potential investors who are seriously interested.

'Vergara is a successful businessman and, at last for MLS, a soccer man'

Mexican wave

From south of the border comes Mexican businessman Vergara, whose millions were made by marketing a weight-reduction health food supplement. A successful businessman, then, but also, at last for MLS, a through-and-through soccer man, one who already owns two clubs – Saprissa in Costa Rica and Guadalajara (known as Chivas, the goats) in Mexico.

While nothing has been signed, the plan is for Vergara to start a new team – Chivas-USA – probably in 2005.

Where will they play? "We'd like it to be somewhere where he's going to be successful!" says Gazidis. Meaning somewhere where there is a large Mexican community. Likely sites are either Houston (where MLS staged an exhibition game between Mexico and the USA in May that drew a sell-out crowd of over 69,000) or San Diego, right on the Mexican border.

Vergara's entry could also spark much-needed movement towards MLS's acceptance and support by the huge Mexican-American community. Although Vergara would be bound by the same player regulations as the other MLS clubs – his team would have to be made up of mostly Americans – he could employ a Mexican coach, recruit Mexican-American players (a group not much sought after by the current MLS coaches, none of whom is Hispanic), and use the three foreign slots to bring in Mexican stars.

Incredibly, Vergara's move marks the first really major attempt at soccer collaboration between the two countries. It must help what Gazidis describes as MLS's "challenge to connect better with our Hispanic audience – after eight years we're still trying to convince them we're worthy of their respect and support.

"Bringing in Chivas-USA is almost a short cut to accomplishing that – but we have to make the same effort with all of our teams."

Grounds for optimism...Los Angeles' soccer-specific Home Depot Center stadium has been deemed a success

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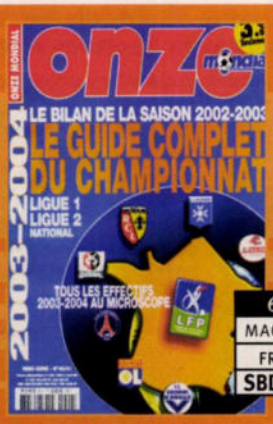

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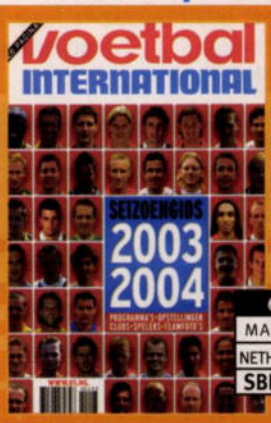

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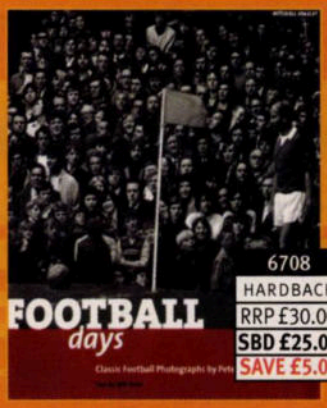

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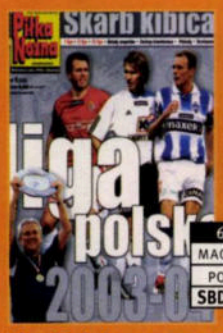

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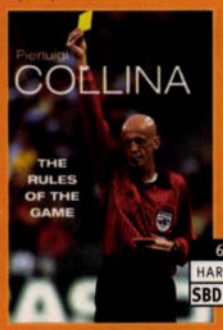

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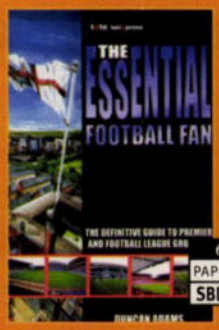

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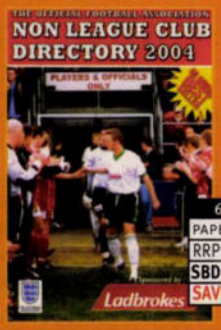

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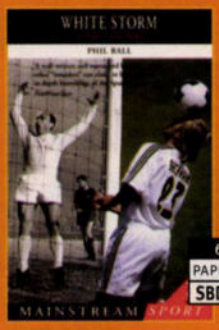

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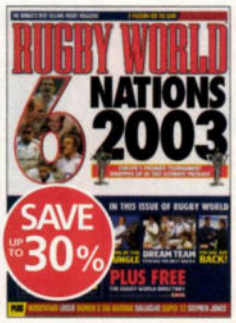

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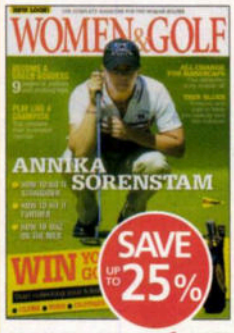

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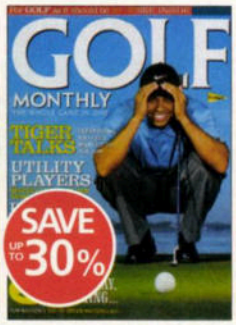

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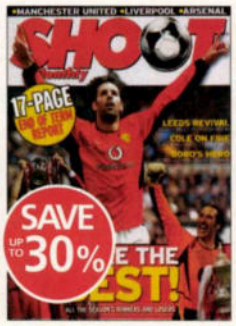

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International man of mystery

Tim Vickery on the player Argentina is learning to love again

IN ARGENTINA THE world is constantly being put to rights over a cup of coffee. The bars of Buenos Aires reverberate to the sound of sophisticated debate. But there is another side to the story; Argentina also plays host to a hysterical mysticism beyond all rational comprehension, as shown by the past worship of Juan and Eva Peron, and even the mutilation of their corpses.

Juan Sebastian Veron must have felt that he was being mutilated when South America's 2006 World Cup qualifiers got under way. Football brings both sides of Argentina's contradictory character to the surface, and the Chelsea midfielder found himself caught in the crossfire as Argentina began their campaign at home to Chile.

It was their first game in Buenos Aires for almost two years. In the meantime the country had all but fallen apart economically, and the football team had flopped at the Korea/Japan World Cup having gone to the finals as a shining and much-needed example of Argentinian success. As the symbol of the team, Veron became the public face of failure, a scapegoat for all the country's woes.

The hostility that greeted Veron at the start of the Chile game defied belief. Banners proclaiming "Veron is a traitor" and "Veron is English" hung around the stadium. The ground was eerily quiet, the silence broken only by a piercing chorus of whistles every time Argentina's No 11 received the ball. In terms of sustained cold contempt, it surpassed anything Brazil had to cope with in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo during their struggles of the last World Cup qualifying campaign. The boos then led Rivaldo to threaten to quit international football and sent the team scuttling away to play home games in smaller provincial cities.

But Veron held firm. "It was much worse than I expected," he said afterwards, "but I'm not going to make a scene. I wouldn't like it to affect the team, though. The team comes before the players" – meaning that if being singled out lets the others escape unscathed, then so be it.

'As the symbol of the Argentina team, he became the public face of failure'

Veron has found the burdens of leadership thrust upon him now that Diego Simeone has finally gone. He has also taken over Simeone's midfield holding role. It is one of the changes coach Marcelo Bielsa has made in the wake of the World Cup failure. Even as Argentina sailed through the last set of qualifiers, Bielsa's 3-3-1-3 system was controversial. Some said it smothered the forward line too close to the opposing goal. Having two fixed wingers was too rigid and made them too easy to mark. Veron was too far forward, he was not the type of player who did his best work in the final third of the pitch.

The World Cup ignited an intense tactical debate, the kind of discussion in which Argentina excels, and Bielsa would seem to agree with some of his critics. After all, last year it was the attack that let Argentina down.

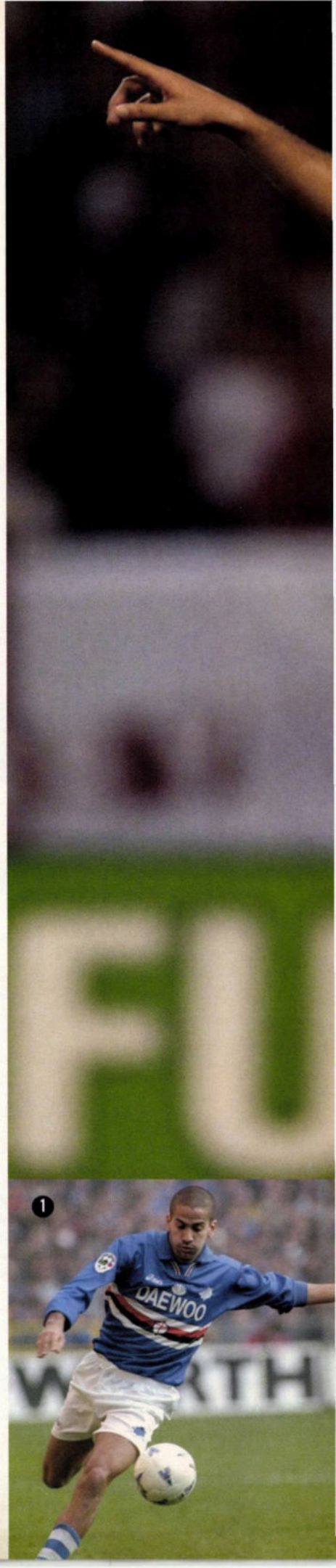
With a few changes he trusts that his rebuilt side will be able to turn territorial domination into goals. In characteristic Bielsa-ese, he has traded 'verticality' for 'elaboration' – meaning that the direct Claudio Lopez on the left wing has given way to Andres D'Alessandro, a more skilful player given licence to roam inside and combine with Pablo Aimar, a darting figure who has taken Veron's old attacking midfield slot.

So Veron has dropped deeper. He has played in the holding role before – many think that Manchester United would have got more out of him had they played him there. With his solid footballing sense and range of passing, he is obviously suited to having the play in front of him; he can dictate the rhythm – giving a short ball and moving to receive the return, or hitting long to the flanks.

But in Argentina's case there is a complication. Veron is protecting a back three, not a back four. It puts a real strain on his defensive skills. "I feel comfortable in the role," he says, "and it's worth the sacrifice to have sensational players like Aimar and D'Alessandro in the team. But it is difficult to take care of the space behind me. I've always pushed forward, but now I have to pay more attention to what's behind me than what's in front."

Sweeper Roberto Ayala agrees that "it will take us time to get used to Veron in this position. His main characteristic is playmaking. Defensively, we have to communicate better. This time" – against Chile and Venezuela, a 2-2 draw and a 3-0 win respectively – "we didn't defend very well."

Indeed, Veron was caught out of position and forced into rash tackles that got him booked in both games. He is suspended for the match against Bolivia on November 15. But he will be welcomed back against Colombia four days later. With the ball at his feet he made Argentina play; he gave them shape and provided the platform for their exciting new generation of attacking talent. He even won over many of the boo boys. As the post-World Cup hysteria starts to fade, those who debate tactics in the bars of Buenos Aires can once more sing Veron's praises.



CHANGING PLACES
The many roles of Veron

After arriving from Argentina's Boca Juniors in 1996, Veron quickly settled in the **Sampdoria** (1) side coached by Sven Goran Eriksson and featuring the skills of Roberto Mancini.

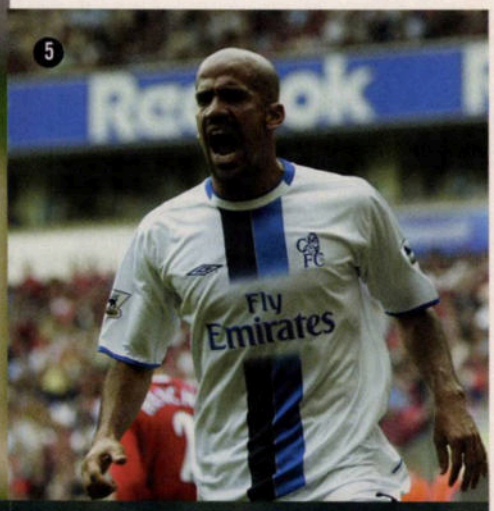
When Eriksson and Mancini moved to Lazio in the summer of 1997, Veron adopted a more attacking role before a £13 million move to **Parma** (2) a year later. There, he established his reputation as a world-class playmaker behind the strikeforce of Hernan Crespo and Enrico Chiesa. Parma won the 1999 UEFA Cup.

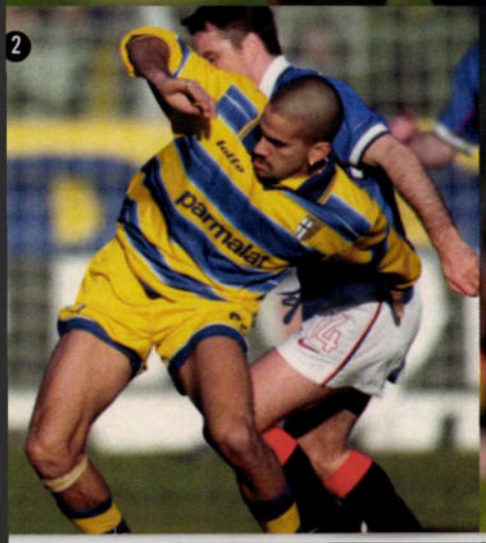
Veron achieved his greatest success so far in a similar role at **Lazio** (3) following a £19m move in summer 1999. Playing in front of such assured defensive midfielders as Diego Simeone and Dino Baggio, and between Karel Poborsky and Sergio Conceicao, he excelled in an attacking role. With Pavel Nedved also in the side, Eriksson even played Veron as a second striker. Lazio won the Italian League in 2000.

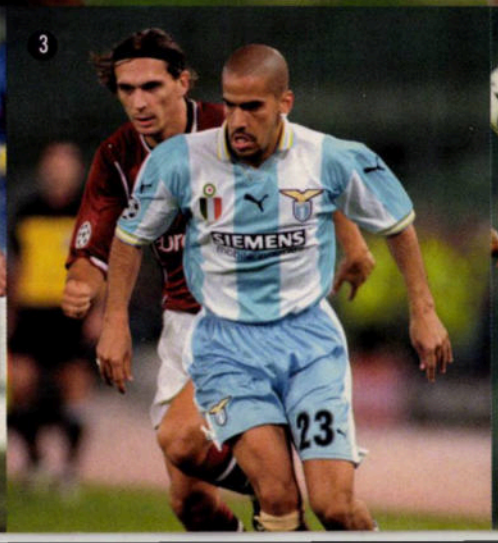
But Veron never recaptured the same form at **Manchester United** (4) following his £26m move the following season. Playing a deep midfield role was never a serious possibility given Roy Keane's importance to the side, but nor was he given time to settle into a more attacking role, with manager Alex Ferguson playing him out of position on the left.

His £13m sale to **Chelsea** (5) this summer brought to an end an uneasy two years. However, coach Claudio Ranieri has not fielded the same XI in consecutive games, and Veron may be a victim of the Italian's constant tinkering. It is ominous, too, that Chelsea have ordered him to do extra training because they are unhappy with his workrate.

Seven years after Veron arrived in Europe, we are no nearer discovering his best position.







Standing alone

Kevin Palmer hears Arsenal's manager put the case for his under-fire team

WORLD SOCCER: Does your side command respect in the Champions League?
ARSENE WENGER: Manchester United have won the European Cup and so have teams like Real Madrid and Milan, so that gives them a massive advantage against smaller sides. We may not have achieved as much as others, but I know we are respected, and no one enjoys playing against Arsenal. Maybe our opponents don't fear us yet, but we have a chance to change that. We have a fifth-place ranking with UEFA so obviously our efforts have not been as bad as some people think.

Are you a fan of the new-look Champions League this season?
We have a different challenge because there is no second group phase. I enjoyed that part of the competition, even though it was tough for us at times and we have not always progressed for one reason or another. It was football of the highest quality, but the television people obviously wanted more drama. Let's get through the group stage and see if we adapt well to the new challenge.

How big a blow was the 3-0 defeat by Inter in the first group game?
Looking at the result, people will believe we were outclassed, but that was not the case. Inter took advantage of our mistakes in a professional way, but we matched them in many areas of the game. I compare it to the match against Manchester United a couple of years ago when we ended up losing 6-1. United's first three shots went in that day and there is no coming back from that. They are one-off results and you have to know about football to appreciate this. Against Inter it was so frustrating. That was not a familiar position for us and none of us enjoyed the experience.

Did that result suggest your team are not equipped to succeed in Europe?
Not at all. We have to be brave enough to admit it was a bad night. There is no point in me trying to pretend otherwise. But after we won 3-1 at Roma last season, people said we would win every trophy available. That was a night when everything went right for us, and this game was the exact opposite. They had three shots in the first half and every one was a goal. This happens in football sometimes.

How do you explain your Champions League failings?
We will probably play around 60 games this season and 40 will be very good, while 10 will be average and 10 bad. That would be normal from this team and we have to accept that. But when I look at the two sides in that Inter game, I would still say we were a match for them. We will get the chance to prove as much in the return game at the San Siro. The Champions League is the top competition in world club soccer, without a doubt. We have to be ready to make the step up and as we can still qualify, I will not panic. In fact, I am very confident we will reach the next stage.

How important is the proposed new stadium at Ashburton Grove to Arsenal's development?
We can match our rivals on the pitch, but to match them off it the new stadium is vital. We cannot do that at Highbury. I have great belief in the Ashburton Grove project, but we have been waiting a little too long to find out if it is going to happen. For now, the quality of the football we play and the ambition of this club matches what my players need, but there needs to be a long-term target. If we get our new stadium, we will be a top power at world level. That is why Thierry Henry, Robert Pires and Patrick Vieira decided to sign their new contracts.

Does the fact that you don't have a massive transfer budget inspire you to be successful?
To achieve things with the resources we have will be very tough. You look at what Chelsea have done this summer and compare it to what we have spent – it's impossible to say we are playing by the same rules. That is why I say this is the biggest challenge I have had so far and I can tell you my players are very hungry to make sure we don't finish second in the Premiership again. I have never been more determined at any point in my career. After what happened last year and the disappointment we felt, we cannot wait to win something this time.

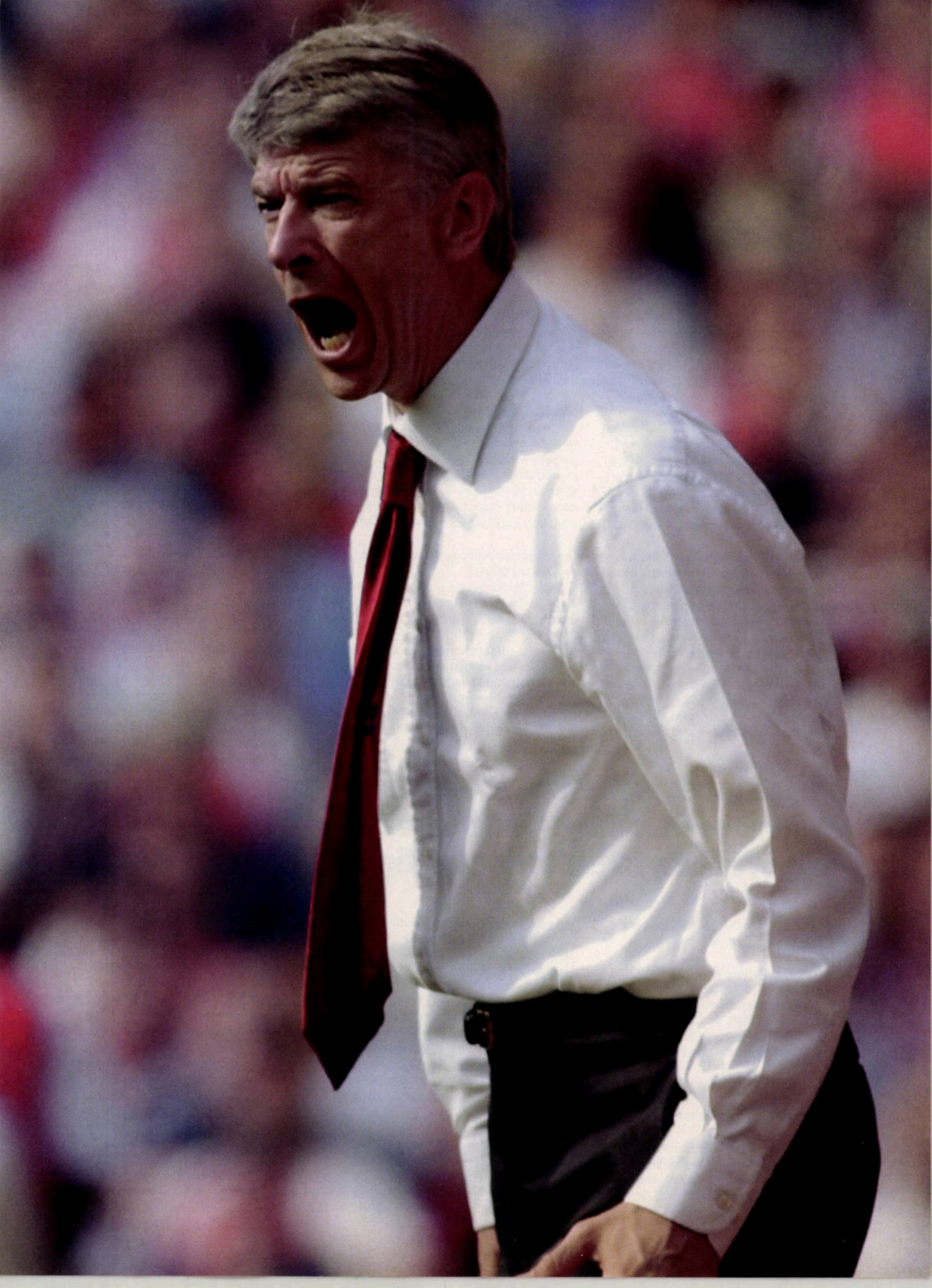
How do you assess the rise of Chelsea since Roman Abramovich bought the club?
Chelsea are now the main force in English football, the most powerful side in the League. Everyone said last season would be a two-horse race for the Premiership, but you have to add Chelsea to that now. They are on a different planet to us from a financial point of view. They are also on a different planet from Real Madrid, a force no one can compete with, and everyone has to be a little concerned by that. But it could be that if Mr Abramovich gets fed up one day and leaves Chelsea, they will quickly drop back down a couple of levels. At the moment, the ambition of the club seems to be built around one man and that is a little dangerous.

So are Chelsea serious contenders for the Champions League this season?
How can you finish fourth in the Premiership, spend £100 million buying some of the best players in the world and try to pretend you are not serious contenders for every competition you enter? If Chelsea want to continue to say they will take time to settle and need a year to do that, I won't believe them and no one else will either. It would be crazy to buy guys like Crespo, Makelele and whoever else and then turn around and say they will not be a threat straight away. We bought five or six players in 1997 and won the Double the next season, so I expect Chelsea to challenge for every trophy this season.

'To match our rivals off the pitch a new stadium is vital. If we get it, we will be a top power at world level'

Does your squad have the strength in depth to challenge for the Premiership and Champions League this season?
Time will tell. Chelsea now have the biggest squad in English football, without a doubt. They are followed by Liverpool and then Manchester United. We are fourth in terms of numbers available, but that does not mean the Premiership will finish that way. In fact, I'm sure it won't. I have to adapt to the resources of my club, and the reality is I may be in this position for some time to come. I have a team full of top-quality internationals, but, like any manager, I would like to have a bigger squad and probably need one.

So is it realistic to expect success this season with the fourth-best squad in England?
There is always a way to be successful, whatever the resources, and that is my challenge now. I am not a genius – if I was, we would have won the championship last season. So if people say I need to be a genius to win trophies against sides with much bigger resources, then Arsenal are in big trouble.



Roman conqueror

Chelsea's new Romanian forward talks to Dominique Antognoni

WORLD SOCCER: You're scoring regularly for Chelsea, but it's not entirely clear how you've come to be at Roman Abramovich's club.
ADRIAN MUTU: Abramovich asked [Chelsea coach Claudio] Ranieri to come up with a list of the players he would most like to come to Chelsea. I was on that list because, as I found out later, Ranieri thought I was the player who had improved most in Europe in the past season. All those who were on the list have come to Chelsea, apart from Totti, Nesta and Vieri. If I understand it right, the boss's list was a little like those that fans draw up – their dream team. I don't think he thought for one minute that he would really get all those players.

Why did you decide to come? Was it the money?
Not just that – if that sort of money had been offered to me by a club in Japan or Qatar, say, I wouldn't have taken it. But in Italy, there wasn't much chance of me being able to break into the really big time: Roma have Totti and Cassano, Inter have Recoba, Juve have Del Piero, Milan are chock-full of attacking players – even Rivaldo has been unable to get a place in the side. So where could I go in Italy? Without the Chelsea move, I would have stayed at Parma, where I was already team captain. So when I was offered a far higher salary, plus the chance to play in the Champions League, I said yes right away.

Were the negotiations quite nerve-racking?
There were certainly some tense moments, but that's normal. Parma had been relying on having me and Adriano up front, then, a few weeks before the start of the season, they found themselves in danger of having the partnership broken up.

Who did the negotiating?
Chelsea gave my agent, [Giovanni] Becali, the mandate to deal direct with Parma.

Do you feel appreciated at Chelsea?
Yes, although any player who has been bought for a great deal of money can face a hard time, because if you fail to score, they'll think you weren't worth it. If you go two games without scoring a goal, you find yourself all over the front pages – even your private life is invaded. The tabloids are dreadful. I remember how they treated Ilie Dumitrescu [Mutu's compatriot had a less than successful spell at West Ham in the mid-1990s].

How have the fans been?
I would never have believed it: they sing the whole time, they urge you on, they don't whistle if you make a mistake. That's the difference between England and Italy, where they're on your side only so long as you are doing well. In Italy they really make a fuss of their top players, but here they'll celebrate anyone who does something good.

Do you prefer being an out-and-out striker or a linking player?
Well, Chelsea play me as the second striker, that's the role I prefer. But I love to run, and I often drop back into midfield to help out my team-mates.

Players do sometimes burn the candle at both ends – in London there are many temptations, and English players have a reputation for heavy drinking.
Everywhere has its potential pitfalls, but you go into this game to be professional, hopefully to make a name for yourself and win things, and have some good things happen to you – to see your name in lights, to enjoy people stopping you in the street to tell you how great you are, to have fans clamouring for your autograph. There is time for distractions, too, in this career – it's just that you need to choose the right moment for them.

'Ranieri uses interesting analogies. Before the Blackburn game he told me to move like a toreador at a bullfight'

Are you adapting well to life in London?
Little by little, even though the way they drive still frightens me. The people are nice, and I'm managing well with the language. I've got a nice house in a quiet part of town.

Do you think Chelsea can win the Premiership? Are they better than Manchester United and Arsenal?
Yes, we can win it but it's not a good idea to make comparisons with other teams. We've only just got together, whereas Manchester United and Arsenal have played together for years and have a history of winning the Premiership. But I've got the feeling that our passing quality and attacking ability will always bring goals, whereas their style of teamwork doesn't always produce results. It also looks to me as though Manchester have fewer players this season, and they'll be stretched to cover both Premiership and Champions League games. Who knows how they'll hold up? They may well win the Premiership again, but we're certainly going to pull something special out of the hat this year.

What has Ranieri asked you to do?
Simply to score. He's done plenty of tactical work with me in training and he uses interesting analogies. Before the Blackburn Rovers game he told me that I should move like a toreador at a bullfight – by which he meant with intense concentration. After the game against Leicester City he said I had been like a serpent. He likes animals, you see.

What type of coach is he?
Understanding, easy to approach and precise. You can just tell that he has an enormous passion for football, and he is always able to get that love of the game across to you. I like him very much.

How has he reacted to all this talk about Sven Goran Eriksson coming to Chelsea?
Well, that's what football is like – [Inter coach Hector] Cuper had to live with the 'threat' of [being replaced by Roberto] Mancini, Del Bosque found himself in a similar situation [at Real Madrid], and so did [Milan's Carlo] Ancelotti. Ranieri is Italian and he understands that this sort of thing is all part of the footballing life.

But what if Eriksson did take Ranieri's place?
In football we don't think of tomorrow.

Have you set yourself a goalscoring target for the season?
I'd like it to be at least 10.

Let's talk about some of your team-mates who also arrived at Stamford Bridge this summer. Firstly, Claude Makelele.
He's self-effacing, but he always knows what needs to be done. In my first European game, when I was still playing with [Romanian side] Arges, we played Celta Vigo and Claude was playing for them. When he turned up in London this summer he reminded me of that game, which they won 7-0, although he also told me that the player

in the No 10 shirt especially drove him mad. I had to tell him that was me.

Hernan Crespo?

A striker who lives only to score goals. His understanding of Veron's game is sublime. Have you seen the way those two integrate their play?

What about some of the stalwarts...Marcel Desailly, for example?

An inspiration – the best-loved, most-valued player in the side. Everyone calls him The Commandant.

What do your team-mates call you?

Puff Daddy, because I love R&B music.

What has [ex-Chelsea Romanian] Dan Petrescu had to say to you?

Among other things, he has advised me to build up a rapport with the press and the fans. That may seem obvious, but in fact it's something that's all too easy to forget.

Is a financial crisis looming in football?

I think there may be, but we must just hope that things change with time, even though it isn't something we can complain about at Chelsea.

Was it to your advantage that Inter lost you – to Verona – because of money issues?

Well, seeing how things have worked out, I'd have to say yes.

Do you still think about Inter?

They introduced me to the big time when I was still a very young striker playing for a Romanian side and so I will always be grateful to [Inter president Massimo] Moratti.

Are there any other Romanian players who you think are ready for Italy?

Quite a few, but the two that come to mind first are [Florin] Cernat, who plays for Kyiv Dinamo, and Marius Niculae, at Sporting Lisbon. Niculae is back from injury and raring to get scoring again.

Is it still your dream to play for Barcelona?

Yes, because that's where Hagi played, and he is my idol. I'm sure it's going to happen one day. But to pull on the Real Madrid shirt would be extraordinary too.

Life certainly seems to be smiling on you at the moment.

I'm playing in a great team, I'm part of the Champions League, I've got a wonderful little son, so who could ask for more?

FACT FILE

Club Chelsea (Eng)
Country Romania
Born January 8, 1979, in Bucharest
Previous clubs Arges Pitesti, Dinamo Bucharest, Internazionale (Ita), Verona (Ita), Parma (Ita)
International debut March 2000, v Greece
International caps 31 (8 goals)

Jubilee man

It is 50 years since Real Madrid's finest player – arguably the world's greatest – arrived in the Spanish capital. Keir Radnedge reports

NO DAVID BECKHAM-style media frenzy greeted Alfredo Di Stefano, wife Sara and two daughters when they arrived originally in Madrid 50 years ago this past September 23. Just a driver from Real Madrid and two journalists, standing on the platform at Atocha station.

Di Stefano recalled his arrival on the sleeper train from Barcelona on the eve of the Trofeo Bernabeu match between Madrid and his original club, River Plate, which celebrated his jubilee – to the very day.

"We arrived spot on half past 10 in the morning," he says. "They took me to have a medical check and something to eat so I dumped my family on the steps of the Emperatriz hotel and went straight on to the stadium because a game had been arranged that afternoon against French club Nancy, even though I hadn't trained properly for two months.

"The stadium was being redeveloped – just like now – and I wasn't in good shape because I'd been hanging around in Barcelona for three months since May.

"No one had known whether I was to play for Barcelona or Real Madrid so in all that time I'd only played three friendly matches. I'd got fed up with it all. At one stage there was even talk of transferring me to Juventus. But everything was worked out in the end so I came to Madrid, where I've stayed ever since."

Madrid's president, Santiago Bernabeu, had been impressed by Di Stefano a year earlier when he had starred for Millonarios of Bogota – winning guests at Madrid's 50th birthday party. Much of the next year was taken up by a tug o'war for the player with Barcelona.

The Catalans, who also spotted Di Stefano at the Madrid birthday, had paid £17,000 to his original club River Plate. Madrid paid an identical fee to Millonarios, who had lured Di Stefano from Buenos Aires in 1948 to join the pirate Colombian league outside FIFA jurisdiction.

FIFA truce

When FIFA brokered a truce in 1952 it was agreed that players should see out their contracts in Colombia then return to their original clubs – but that if another club wanted to buy one of the players then they had to agree terms with both. Hence Barcelona and Madrid each ended up with half of Di Stefano.

The Nancy match was hardly the most auspicious start for the new man, playing in front of fans who wondered whether this Argentinian centre-forward was worth all the fuss. Yet with the hindsight of those 50 years it can be argued that September 23, 1953, was the day that changed the game.

Two years later the European Champions Cup was launched at the prompting of the French newspaper *L'Equipe*. Madrid won it five years in a row. Di Stefano scored in every Final, culminating in their 7-3 demolition of Eintracht Frankfurt at Hampden Park, Glasgow.

Popularly, no player can ever be bigger than a club, but Di Stefano at

History maker...Florentino Perez (left) leads the applause for Di Stefano at the Trofeo Bernabeu match between Madrid and River Plate

Real Madrid and, later, Pele at Santos were exceptions that proved the rule.

Madrid, inspired by Di Stefano, climbed the international competitive heights, setting a benchmark for sporting glamour that rubbed off on the Madrid club and on European football at a time when television was in its infancy and sponsors were nowhere in sight.

But the Di Stefano-fired success of Madrid and the European Cup fuelled the mixture that inspired Horst Dassler and Joao Havelange to turn the World Cup into a cash machine and set an example greedily pursued by every other sport. Sepp Blatter, Havelange's successor as FIFA president, loves rubbing shoulders with Pele and co. But he considers Di Stefano the greater footballer.

Di Stefano, with Madrid, won five European Cups, eight Spanish Leagues and one Cup, one World Club Cup, two awards as European Footballer of the Year and was five times Spain's top scorer. His European Cup record of 49 goals stands to this day. Miniature replicas of all the silverware were mounted in a frame and presented to him by his three grandchildren at the Bernabeu before Madrid played River Plate.

Stefano still enjoys watching as much football as he can, which is a great deal since he was installed as Real Madrid's honorary president by president Florentino Perez. He is also careful about comparisons between eras.

"In my time," he says, "we had an outstanding team with extraordinary individuals. We defended with five and we attacked with five. The present team is spectacular as well, though in a different way because there's a lot more 'percussion' in today's football.

"People always thought that South American football was much slower and more technical than European football, but that didn't matter to me because I was quick anyway."

Barcelona compromise

Assessments did matter, however, to Barcelona. A political compromise meant Di Stefano was due to play two seasons with each club but, after six weeks, Barcelona decided Di Stefano was not worth the wait and Madrid handed over the £17,000 the Catalans had paid River Plate.

Clearly, they had failed to perceive Di Stefano's inner drive and ambition. He says now: "I really came here determined to do something very special. I didn't come for the money, I came to achieve."

'Arguably, September 23, 1953, was the day that changed the game'

Not that Di Stefano attaches much significance to individual match memories. He says: "I have lots of fantastic memories but I can't pick any one above another. The main thing I remember was that I came to play for two years, signed for four and stayed all my life. Four of our children were born here and I've always kept my main home in Madrid. Even when I went to play at Espanyol in Barcelona at the end of my career my wife stayed in Madrid – and then again when I was coaching other clubs."

Unlike many old heroes, Di Stefano still enjoys watching as much football as he can, which is a great deal since he was installed as Real Madrid's honorary president by president Florentino Perez. He is also careful about comparisons between eras.

"In my time," he says, "we had an outstanding team with extraordinary individuals. We defended with five and we attacked with five. The present team is spectacular as well, though in a different way because there's a lot more 'percussion' in today's football.

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Barcelona carry the chip to this day. They forget, conveniently, that two years earlier they had hijacked the great Hungarian exile Ladislav Kubala en route to Madrid.

As Kubala himself, years later, observed about the Di Stefano furore: "It was Barcelona's own fault. Basically, they were in just too much of a hurry."

Real Madrid and Di Stefano, on September 23, celebrated the virtue of patience.

QUIZ mitre

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Mitre has kindly donated a top-quality football for this month's quiz. The first correct entry selected at random after November 21 will win the ball. Five runners-up will each win a *World Soccer Yearbook*.

SEND YOUR ENTRY, ON A POSTCARD, TO: NOVEMBER QUIZ, *World Soccer*, King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS

THIS MONTH'S POSER:

Name the NINE players to have played for England since the 1966 World Cup whose surnames begin and end with the same letter?

SEPTEMBER QUIZ WINNERS

1ST PRIZE:
Duncan Aitkenhead, Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire.

5 RUNNERS-UP:
Manuel Castrillo, Leon, Spain; David Collins, Co Kildare, Republic of Ireland; Michael McMenamy, Belfast; Robert Shepherd, London; Martin Thundercliffe, Bracknell, Berks.

THE ANSWER TO THE SEPTEMBER QUIZ (Name 15 players who have played for clubs in the top divisions in England, Italy and Spain) was any 15 from the following 20:

Christian Karembeu (Sampdoria/Middlesbrough/Real Madrid);
Darko Kovacevic (Juventus/Sheffield Wednesday/Real Sociedad);
Savo Milosevic (Parma/Aston Villa/Zaragoza, Espanyol);
Christian Panucci (Milan, Roma/Chelsea/Real Madrid);
Christophe Dugarry (Milan/Birmingham/Barcelona);
Winston Bogarde (Milan/Chelsea/Barcelona);
Stefan Schwarz (Fiorentina/Arsenal, Sunderland/Valencia);
Didier Deschamps (Juventus/Chelsea/Valencia);
Paolo Futre (Milan/West Ham/Atletico Madrid);
Florin Raducioiu (Milan/West Ham/Espanyol);
Laurent Blanc (Parma/Man Utd/Barcelona);
Joachim Bjorklund (Vicenza/Sunderland/Valencia);
Gheorghe Popescu (Lecce/Tottenham/Barcelona);
Nelson Vivas (Inter/Arsenal/Celta Vigo);
Alex Manninger (Fiorentina/Arsenal/Espanyol);
Pierre Wome (Roma/Fulham/Espanyol);
Aljosa Asanovic (Valladolid/Derby/Napoli);
John Aloisi (Coventry/Cremonese/Osasuna);
Gaizka Mendieta (Valencia, Barcelona/Lazio/Middlesbrough);
Mario Stanic (Sporting Gijon/Parma/Chelsea)

End of the slump

Under unheralded coach Plamen Markov, the Bulgarians are back at Europe's top table. Nick Bidwell reports

PLAMEN MARKOV is a devotee of classical literature – and his achievements as coach of Bulgaria make for equally good reading.

Not only did he successfully steer the team through an awkward Euro 2004 group including Croatia and Belgium, leading them out of a slump that stretched back to the 1998 World Cup. He has also comprehensively answered the many critics who felt he was out of his depth when appointed to replace Stoicho Mladenov in December 2001.

The feelings of unease about Markov could be easily understood. Yes, he had an excellent track record as a player, having appeared 38 times in Bulgaria's midfield and starring for an impressive CSKA Sofia side which knocked holders Nottingham Forest and Liverpool out of the European Cup in the early 1980s. But in terms of coaching, he still had it all to prove.

Apart from a four-month spell in charge of CSKA in 1995, all Markov's managerial experience had been accumulated outside the top flight. He gained his first taste of management as player-coach with French part-timers Grenoble and spent many years in the Bulgarian Second Division with Chardafon Gabrovo, FC Minion and hometown club Vidima-Rakovski.

Former Bulgaria defender and coach Dimitar Penev was far from alone in lambasting the federation for gambling on the largely untested Markov. "Giving this important job to a Second Division coach is a real risk," he complained. "In the end, our footballing authorities will have to take full responsibility for their actions."

However, Markov would prove anything but a flawed choice. An excellent organiser, relentlessly demanding and a good motivator, he soon had Bulgaria on the road to recovery following their failure to qualify for the last World Cup, a half-hearted campaign that ended in the humiliation of a 6-0 drubbing at the hands of the Czech Republic. Players who seemed to be going through the motions under Mladenov were now oozing endeavour and fight; a shapeless XI became a cohesive 4-4-2 unit.

"I couldn't be happier," exclaimed Markov after Bulgaria clinched their place in the European finals with a 3-0 win in Andorra. "We

Raising the standard...Markov's new-look Bulgaria (in white) take in the patriotic fervour before their 2-2 Euro 2004 qualifying draw with Belgium in Sofia last June

Great progress...Stilian Petrov

had missed out on the last two international tournaments and it's very satisfying personally to have played a part in making our national team successful again.

"I can only applaud my players for the great professionalism they have shown during the qualifiers. Winning in Belgium and at home to Croatia gave us the perfect start to our group, and from then on the boys were determined not to let that advantage slip. We have proved we can play a high grade of football. We deserve to be back in the European mainstream."

Yet while Markov deserves the utmost credit for putting Bulgaria on the road to Euro 2004, it is undeniable that he has benefited from the growing assurance of a crop of talented youngsters.

Bayer Leverkusen frontrunner and current Bulgarian Footballer of the Year Dimitar Berbatov can be a handful with his pace and good movement, though he needs to be more composed in front of goal; Georgi Peev of Kyiv Dynamo is a versatile and technically-polished schemer; classy Celtic attacking midfielder Stilian Petrov has improved immeasurably over the past couple of years; while Martin Petrov – no relation – of German club Wolfsburg is a left-winger or midfielder of considerable flair.

Indeed, Markov, who nurtured the skills of a teenage Youri Djorkaeff while in charge at Grenoble, is awash with young attacking-third promise. Star Under-21 midfielder Alexander Mladenov is shaping up well at Hertha Berlin, playmaker Emil Gargorov has been in exciting form for CSKA lately, while forwards Velizar Dimitrov (CSKA) and Georgi Chilikov (Levski) have both made impressive starts to their national team careers. The latter pair will be valid alternatives to Portsmouth's Svetoslav Todorov if he fails to recover in time for the finals from a cruciate ligament injury.

Long gone are the days of Euro 96 and France 98 when the Bulgarian squad was top-heavy with veterans past their prime. The wheel has turned full circle, with the present side very much lacking in international experience.

Balakov blow

Certainly, Markov could have done without two of his most seasoned players – highly-dependable Charlton right-back Radostin Kishishev and playmaker Krassimir Balakov – calling time on their national team obligations this summer.

Even at 37, Balakov was as inspirational as ever last term and there can be no doubt that his

Turning it round...Plamen Markov

leadership, invention and free-kicks will be sorely missed. After all, for the best part of 15 years, Bulgaria's attacking play has revolved around his sweet left foot.

"Players of the class of Balakov do not come along very often," says Martin Petrov. "We would have loved to see him cap his great career at Euro 2004. But he had made plans to join the management at Stuttgart, and we have to respect his decision. We shall be hoping to honour him with some good displays in Portugal."

Still only 28, Kishishev's decision to concentrate solely on his club commitments has left Markov with a problem. He recently experimented with 1860 Munich midfielder Daniel Borimirov at right-back, but while he offers much going forward, his lack of physical presence makes him a distinct liability. Another option could be Nikolai Krastev of Naftex or Martin Stankov, who plays in Turkey for Malatyaspor.

Although Ivailo Petkov is an outstanding left-back, Bulgaria's rearguard could be found wanting when facing Europe's best attackers.

Keeper Zdravko Zdravkov is no iron-clad guarantee of security and could yet be unseated by Dimitar Ivankov of Levski, while the centre-back pairing of Rosen Kirilov and Predrag Pazin – one of three naturalised Serbs in the squad with defender Zlatomir Zagorcic and forward or attacking midfielder Zoran Jankovic – are combative and strong but vulnerable to pace.

First round casualties at Euro 96, Bulgaria may have to raise their game to avoid the same fate in Portugal.

THE SQUAD

	CLUB	DOB	CAPS	GLS
GOALKEEPERS				
Dimitar IVANKOV	Levski Sofia	30.10.75	18	0
Stoyan KOLEV	CSKA Sofia	03.02.76	3	0
Zdravko ZDRAVKOV	Istanbulspor (Tur)	04.10.70	57	0
DEFENDERS				
Rosen KIRILOV	Litex Lovech	04.01.73	36	0
Nikolai KRASTEV	Naftex	29.10.79	3	0
Predrag PAZIN	Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)	14.03.73	24	0
Ivailo PETKOV	Istanbulspor (Tur)	02.12.75	47	3
Georgi PETROV	Beijing Sanyuan (Chn)	25.02.74	6	0
Martin STANKOV	Malatyaspor (Tur)	25.02.74	2	0
Ilian STOYANOV	Levski Sofia	20.01.77	19	0
Zlatomir ZAGORCIC	Litex Lovech	15.06.71	18	0
Zhivko ZHELEV	Litex Lovech	23.07.79	5	0
MIDFIELDERS				
Daniel BORIMIROV	1860 Munich (Ger)	15.01.70	63	5
Emil GARGOROV	CSKA Sofia	15.02.81	1	0
Marian HRISTOV	Kaiserslautern (Ger)	29.07.73	32	4
Alexander MLADENOV	Hertha Berlin (Ger)	25.06.82	0	0
Georgi PEEV	Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr)	11.03.79	32	0
Milen PETKOV	AEK Athens (Gre)	12.01.74	31	0
Martin PETROV	Wolfsburg (Ger)	15.01.79	36	4
Stilian PETROV	Celtic (Sco)	05.07.79	43	6
Svetoslav PETROV	CSKA Sofia	12.02.78	11	0
Todor YANCHEV	CSKA Sofia	19.05.76	11	0
FORWARDS				
Dimitar BERBATOV	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)	30.01.81	25	15
Georgi CHILIKOV	Levski Sofia	23.08.78	5	1
Velizar DIMITROV	CSKA Sofia	13.04.79	6	2
Georgi IVANOV	Levski Sofia	02.07.76	30	4
Zoran JANKOVIC	Dalian Shide (Chn)	08.02.74	12	2
Vladimir MANCHEV	Lille (Fra)	06.10.77	10	0
Stoiko SAKALIEV	Naftex	25.03.79	2	0
Svetoslav TODOROV	Portsmouth (Eng)	30.08.78	31	4

Caps and goals up to and including Andorra v Bulgaria (10.09.03)

The quiet revolution

Coach Karel Bruckner has changed the mood in the Czech squad, with devastating results. Sam Beckwith reports

AFTER CLINCHING THEIR Euro 2004 berth with a 3-1 win over Holland in Prague, the Czech players bounced their dignified, conservatively-suited coach Karel Bruckner shoulder-high.

It was an unusual sight, capping a spectacular run of results for Bruckner's men, who are unbeaten in the 17 games since he took charge and are rated by captain Pavel Nedved as better than the Czech side that finished runners-up at Euro 96.

A midfield featuring unpredictable Karel Poborsky, hard-working Tomas Galasek and the sheer quality of Nedved and Tomas Rosicky ranks among Europe's best. Up front, 6ft 7in striker Jan Koller is as effective as he is ungainly, forming a powerful partnership with speedy Milan Baros. At the back, a talented but inexperienced defence, supported by 21-year-old goalkeeper Petr Cech, has come through a tough qualifying campaign with flying colours.

The mood in the Czech camp is buoyant, and few observers think that a place in the semi-finals – or better – is out of reach.

On current form, the Czech Republic could beat almost anybody, but there is a reluctance to take anything for granted in Portugal.

"It's hard to say what will happen," acknowledges Koller. "Remember that we won all our qualifiers in the run-up to Euro 2000 and then didn't advance to the knockout stages at the tournament."

Bruckner, too, sounds a cautious note, saying: "The important factors will be current form and also a bit of good luck, but that's also true for every other team."

Question marks still hang over the defence's lack of major tournament experience, while strength in depth is also a concern. Injuries to Galasek and Patrik Gedeon before September's 3-1 win over Belarus in Minsk, for instance, left Bruckner struggling to find a defensive midfielder capable of filling the role.

Such worries must make a pleasant change, however. Two years ago, the international picture looked far bleaker. Under Bruckner's

Sky's the limit...goalkeeper Petr Cech has displayed the confidence of a veteran since stepping up from the European Championship-winning Under-21 squad

predecessor, Jozef Chovanec, the national team had lurched from under-achievement at Euro 2000 to the disappointment of an ill-fated 2002 World Cup qualifying campaign.

Chovanec, who had once named player morale as his No 1 priority, had taken to criticising individual players, and performances on the pitch suggested that key players were no longer giving 100 per cent.

The World Cup campaign left a sour taste in many mouths, and the media was looking to favoured candidate Jozef Jarabinsky – then coach of Banik Ostrava – to provide a clean break with the Chovanec regime.

Status quo candidate

For many, then, the December 2001 appointment of Bruckner, Chovanec's assistant, was an unpleasant surprise. Patrik Berger, for one, hinted that the move was one of the reasons behind his international retirement.

While personally popular, Bruckner was very much the status quo candidate. He was 62 at the time of his appointment. His involvement in national team affairs dated back to 1987, when he first coached the Czechoslovak Under-21 team and he had stood alongside Chovanec throughout all the recent failures.

His involvement in the national team set-up aside, he had no experience coaching outside his home country.

Yet Bruckner's results, including friendly wins over Italy, France and Turkey, speak for themselves, as he has brought out the best in an extremely talented squad.

The man himself is typically self-effacing when it comes to explaining the change of atmosphere.

"It's clear that our progress is mostly the work of the players," he says. "I'm just glad that I could restore good communication within the team. I think I helped to clear the air a little bit."

Leader of the pack...Pavel Nedved

Koller offers a more generous assessment of Bruckner's contribution: "He motivated us again after the failure to qualify for the 2002 World Cup. Some of the players were considering quitting the team, but the new atmosphere made them stay on."

Bruckner's spells with the Czech Under-21 team and at Sigma Olomouc, a provincial team with a formidable youth set-up, have taught him how to get the best out of young players, a skill that has also benefited the national side enormously.

Bruckner has gradually shifted the emphasis of the team, giving a more prominent role to the generation of players that brought home the 2002 European Under-21 Championship.

Alongside Euro 96 veterans Nedved, Poborsky and Vladimir Smicer, Bruckner named six members of that championship-winning team in the squad for his first Euro 2004 qualifier, against Moldova. All six – Cech, defenders Zdenek Grygera, Tomas Hubschman and Martin Jiranek, and forwards Stepan Vachousek and Baros – are likely to figure in the squad for Portugal.

Cech, in particular, has been a revelation, exuding confidence and maturity way beyond his years.

Bruckner is also tactically astute, with a grasp of the modern game that belies his elderly appearance.

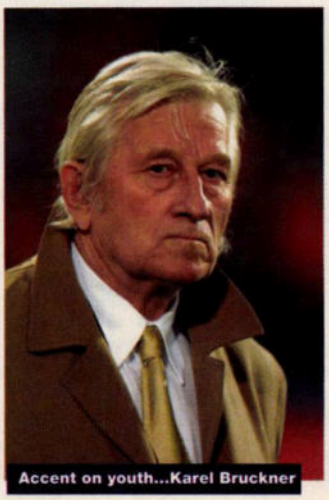
"He always came up with a strategy that worked, whether we were playing Moldova or Holland," says Koller.

Indeed, Bruckner's reading of the game has sometimes been spectacularly effective. With the Czechs trailing 1-0 in Rotterdam in the first game against the Dutch, his second-half replacement of a flagging Rosicky with Baros paid instant dividends. With his first touch the pacy Liverpool striker set up Koller for an equaliser that seemed to shift the balance of power in the group.

Bruckner himself is reluctant to single out the two games against Holland as turning points, however.

"We can't simplify our qualification by saying that holding the Dutch to a 1-1 draw in Rotterdam and then beating them 3-1 in Prague was the only key to our success," he says. "Our opener, against Moldova, was extremely difficult because it was an away game, the weather was horrible and the pitch was difficult.

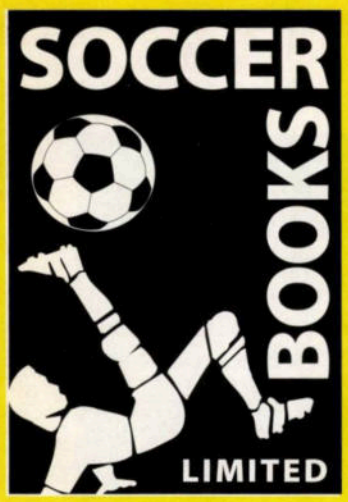
"Still, the team showed enough determination to overcome the odds and to win. The home win over Holland was just the icing on the cake."

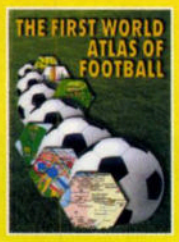

Accent on youth...Karel Bruckner

THE SQUAD

	CLUB	DOB	CAPS	GLS
GOALKEEPERS				
Jaromir BLAZEK	Sparta Prague	29.12.72	3	0
Petr CECH	Rennes (Fra)	20.05.82	14	0
Antonin KINSKY	Slovan Liberec	31.05.75	3	0
DEFENDERS				
Rene BOLF	Banik Ostrava	25.02.74	14	0
Milan FUKAL	Hamburg (Ger)	16.05.75	19	2
Zdenek GRYGERA	Ajax (Hol)	14.05.80	18	1
Tomas HUBSCHMAN	Sparta Prague	04.09.81	12	0
Marek JANKULOVSKI	Udinese (Ita)	09.05.77	22	4
Martin JIRANEK	Reggina (Ita)	25.05.79	5	0
Petr JOHANA	Sparta Prague	01.11.76	12	0
Adam PETROUS	Slavia Prague	19.09.77	3	0
Roman TYCE	1860 Munich (Ger)	07.05.77	14	1
Tomas UJFALUSI	Hamburg (Ger)	24.03.78	21	2
MIDFIELDERS				
Richard DOSTALEK	Slavia Prague	26.04.74	5	0
Tomas GALASEK	Ajax (Hol)	15.01.73	26	0
Patrik GEDEON	Slavia Prague	19.07.75	3	0
Jiri JAROSIK	CSKA Moscow (Rus)	27.10.77	16	0
Vaclav KOLOUSEK	Slovan Liberec	13.04.76	5	1
Pavel NEDVED	Juventus (Ita)	30.08.72	72	17
Karel POBORSKY	Sparta Prague	30.03.72	89	6
Tomas ROSICKY	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)	04.10.80	31	6
Libor SIONKO	Sparta Prague	01.02.77	9	0
Vladimir SMICER	Liverpool (Eng)	24.05.73	66	24
FORWARDS				
Milan BAROS	Liverpool (Eng)	28.10.81	21	12
Tomas DOSEK	Slavia Prague	12.09.78	3	0
Marek HEINZ	Banik Ostrava	04.08.77	2	0
Jan KOLLER	Borussia Dortmund (Ger)	30.03.73	44	26
Vratislav LOKVENC	Kaiserslautern (Ger)	27.09.73	54	8
Jiri STAJNER	Hannover (Ger)	27.05.76	10	1
Stepan VACHOUSEK	Marseille (Fra)	26.07.79	9	1

Caps and goals up to and including Czech Republic v Holland (10.09.03)





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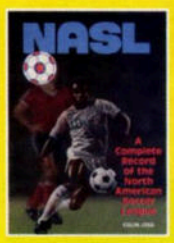

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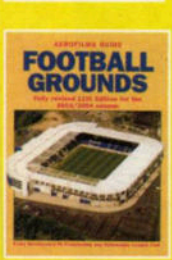

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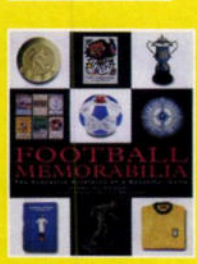

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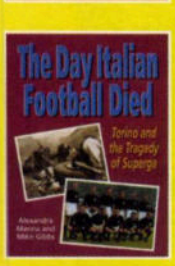

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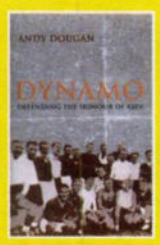

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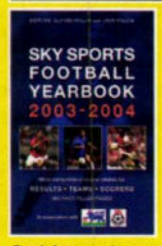

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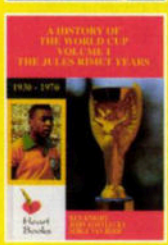

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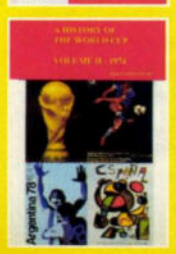

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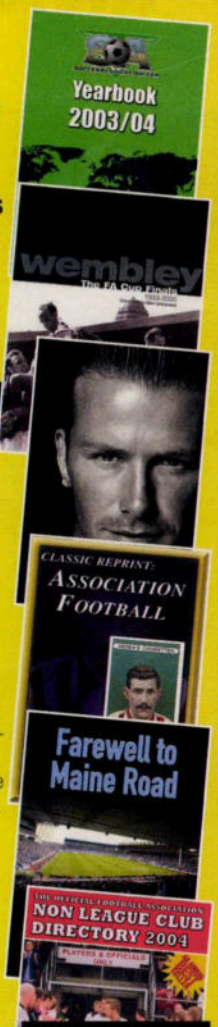

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Put your shirt on me...Lazio's Simone Inzaghi shows that, like his higher-profile brother Filippo, he's no slouch when it comes to scoring goals

No place like Rome

Under Roberto Mancini, Lazio again look a force to be reckoned with. Paddy Agnew reports

ITALIANS LIKE TO call it the *salotto buono*, the place where the makers and shakers of Italian society like to meet and, even more important, be seen to meet. These days, that *'salotto'* is the VIP area at the Olympic stadium in Rome, where the nomenclature of Italian politics from Deputy Prime Minister Gianfranco Fini to opposition leader Francesco Rutelli jostle for a prominent seat to watch Lazio.

It was not always thus. There were times as recently as the mid-1980s when the average Italian politician would have struggled to name even one player in a Lazio side that spent much of that decade in the relative anonymity of Serie B.

These days, all is changed. Notwithstanding a recent financial crisis that threatened the club's very survival, Lazio are still in business, still fielding one of the most attractive and competitive sides in Italian football.

Thanks to talented coach Roberto Mancini and class players such as goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi, Dutch defender Jaap Stam, Serb midfielder Dejan Stankovic, Italian international Stefano Fiore and Argentinian winger Claudio Lopez, Lazio are still one of the select few who can be considered serious title challengers.

Looked at from the longer historical perspective, Lazio's 'elite' status is nothing new. Back in the Fascist era, they were one of the few institutions in Italian life that could thumb their noses at *'Il Duce'*, Benito Mussolini, and live to tell the tale.

Take the famous Sunday when Lazio received a message from government house informing them that they were to suspend that afternoon's game for a short period in order for a speech from *Il Duce* to be broadcast over the stadium's loudspeaker system. The club refused. In the end, the speech was transmitted but at a greatly reduced volume, while the game went on.

'Back in the Fascist era, Lazio were one of the few institutions in Italian life that could thumb their noses at Mussolini and live to tell the tale'

Legend says Lazio were a 'Fascist' club, closely linked to the Mussolini regime. This is partly true and partly misleading. Lazio were indeed run by a Fascist soldier, General Giorgio Vaccaro. But he was more sportsman than soldier and for most of the 1930s was in charge of both the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) and CONI, the Sports Ministry.

Vaccaro was a man who, within the constraints of the time, went his own ▶

Eriksson protege...Mancini

THE COACH

Roberto MANCINI
27.11.64. Outstanding player with Bologna, Sampdoria, Lazio and, briefly, Leicester who also won 36 caps (4 goals) for Italy. A protege of Sven Goran Eriksson as a player and coach. Joined Lazio's coaching staff in 2000 and had a brief spell in charge of doomed Fiorentina.

GOALKEEPERS

Fabrizio CASAZZA
16.09.70. Third in the keepers' pecking order.

Angelo PERUZZI
16.02.70. Former Juventus and national team No 1 (26 caps) now in his fourth season with Lazio.

Matteo SERENI
11.02.75. Much-travelled keeper (Sampdoria, Piacenza, Empoli, Ipswich, Brescia) signed as cover for Peruzzi this summer.

DEFENDERS

Francesco COLONNESE
10.08.71. Former Inter and Napoli defender who has been on the Lazio payroll since 2000 but has rarely featured in the first team.

Giuseppe FAVALLI
08.01.72. Left-back who has been with Lazio since signing from Cremonese in 1992.

Manuel FERNANDO COUTO (Por)
02.08.69. Experienced Portuguese centre-back who is no longer a first choice. Served a ban in 2001 after testing positive for the banned substance nandrolone.

Sinisa MIHAJLOVIC (Ser)
20.02.69. Former midfielder converted by Sven Goran Eriksson into a sweeper/central defender. His free-kicks and corners are a powerful attacking weapon. Clashed with Arsenal's Patrick Vieira in a Champions League match two season ago, when he was accused of racial abuse by the Frenchman.

Paolo NEGRO
16.04.72. Versatile defender now in his 11th season with Lazio.

Defensive key...Stam

Massimo ODDO
14.06.76. Right-back who is now well established in the Italian national squad. Joined from Verona in 2002.

Jaap STAM (Hol)
17.07.72. Dutch international defender and the key figure in Lazio's central defence. Served a ban after testing positive for nandrolone shortly after joining from Manchester United in 2002 having fallen out with Alex Ferguson over comments made in his autobiography.

MIDFIELDERS

Demetrio ALBERTINI
23.08.71. Experienced central midfielder who joined from Milan in the summer having spent last season on loan to Atletico Madrid. A regular in Milan's midfield for 11 seasons, as well as being a key figure for Italy, winning 79 caps.

CESAR Rodriguez Aparecido (Bra)
24.10.74. Versatile Brazilian who can play on the left side of defence or midfield. Made his name at Sao Caetano.

Ousmane DABO (Fra)
08.02.77. Much-travelled player (Rennes, Inter, Vicenza, Parma, Monaco, Atalanta) who joined Lazio this summer.

Stefano FIORE
17.04.75. Talented playmaker who has been played out of position by Mancini on the right of midfield. Sprang on to the international scene in 2000, while with Udinese, and played a key role at Euro 2000.

Giuliano GIANNICHEDDA
21.09.74. Hard-working ball-winner previously with Udinese.

Guerino GOTTARDI
18.12.70. Switzerland-born utility man who can play wide, in central midfield or defence.

Fabio LIVERANI
29.04.76. Attacking midfielder born in Rome to a Somalian mother and Italian father. Became the first black player to appear for the senior Italy side in April 2001.

Experience...Albertini

SERGIO CONCEICAO (Por)
15.11.74. Right-winger who returned to Lazio this summer after spells at Parma and Inter.

Dejan STANKOVIC (Ser)
11.09.78. Serbian international who usually plays in tandem with Albertini in central midfield. Linked with a move in the summer, but decided to stay.

Luciano ZAURI
20.01.78. Atalanta youth product who joined Lazio in the summer.

FORWARDS

CLAUDIO LOPEZ (Arg)
17.07.74. Speedy striker or winger nicknamed El Piojo (The Louse) because of his skinny frame. Joined from Valencia for £16m in 2000 and was linked with a return to Spain this summer, but the move did not materialise.

Bernardo CORRADI
30.03.76. Striker in the Vieri mould who made his name at Chievo and joined Lazio in summer 2002.

Simone INZAGHI
05.04.76. Younger brother of Filippo but not as talented. Previously with Piacenza.

Roberto MUZZI
21.09.71. Experienced striker who, despite being 32, still has a point to prove to his critics. Began his career with Roma, moving on to Pisa, Cagliari and Udinese.

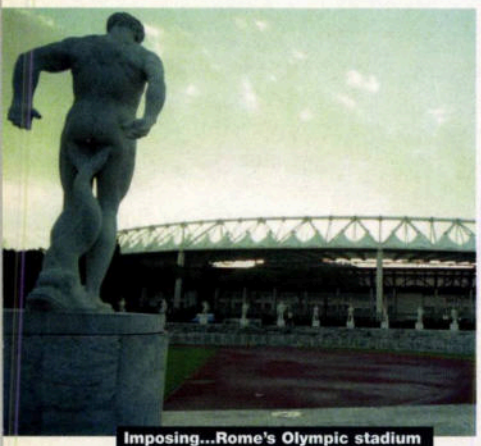
Point to prove...Muzzi

way. When Mussolini oversaw the foundation of Lazio's crosstown rivals AS Roma in 1927, the original plan was for the new club to absorb all other clubs in the capital, including Lazio.

Vaccaro defended Lazio's autonomy, angrily insisting that if any new club were to be formed in the city, then it should be called Lazio. Such was the general's prestige, and his good relations with *Il Duce*, that he won his case. Lazio remained a largely free agent during the Fascist years and the club's charisma attracted perhaps the greatest player of that period, Silvio Piola.

During Vaccaro's time, Lazio's best showing was a second-place finish in 1937. From then until the arrival of financier Sergio Cragnotti in 1992, the club's relative anonymity was interrupted only by a three-year period in the early 1970s when, inspired by striker Giorgio Chinaglia, they won the first of their two *scudettos*.

Things changed with the arrival of Cragnotti. He was an ambitious man with big plans, a tycoon who had made his



Imposing...Rome's Olympic stadium

millions via a food-processing group (Cirio) based in Italy but with significant interests in Europe and Latin America. Having bought the club for a (these days) modest £14million, he spent some £190m over the next eight seasons putting together a team which, under current England coach Sven Goran Eriksson, won the 2000 title.

Eriksson did many good things for Lazio but arguably the best was to sign Mancini. When Eriksson joined them in summer 1997, he immediately told Cragnotti he wanted to bring three players with him from Sampdoria – Mancini, Sinisa Mihajlovic and Juan Veron.

At the time, not everyone could understand his desire to sign Mancini, especially since he was nearly 33. But clearly the Swede knew something the

TACTICS THE CHANGING FACE OF ITALIAN FOOTBALL

LAZIO

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ROMA

NOTHING illustrates the changing nature of Italian football more than a comparison of Lazio's tactics with those of Italy's other Big Five sides.

Under Mancini, a pupil of Sven Goran Eriksson, Lazio play a conventional 4-4-2. In front of keeper Peruzzi, Stam is the outstanding figure in the four-man defence, with Mihajlovic or Fernando Couto alongside him in the centre, Oddo at right-back and Favalli at left-back.

In midfield, Albertini is the pivot, with Stankovic his most likely central partner. Liverani is an alternative, with Stankovic switching to the left, where Dabo, Zauri and Cesar are options. On the right, Fiore and Sergio Conceicao vie for the starting berth.

In attack, Mancini rotates his four strikers, occasionally withdrawing one to play 4-5-1, his only tactical diversion from 4-4-2.

In contrast to Mancini's rigid tactics, Milan play a more fluid 4-1-2-1-2, with Andrea Pirlo the deep midfielder playing in front of the back four. Two grafters (Gennaro Gattuso and Clarence Seedorf) provide the muscle for the attacking playmaker (Rui Costa, Kaka or Rivaldo), who plays behind two strikers – Filippo Inzaghi and Andrii Shevchenko or Jon Dahl Tomasson.

Juventus come nearest to a 4-4-2, but the deployment of the dynamic Pavel Nedved behind the main striker or strikers means they line up as 4-3-1-2 or 4-4-1-1, with the Czech often given free rein to move to the left or right flank.

Inter, under Hector Cuper, have yet to throw off their defensive straitjacket, despite the summer arrival of wide men Andy Van der Meyde, Luciano and Kily Gonzalez. They play mostly 4-4-2, occasionally switching to a back three and five-man midfield. Julio Cruz, Alvaro Recoba and Obafemi Martins give the coach interesting attacking options alongside Christian Vieri.

Roma play 3-4-1-2, with Francesco Totti the key man behind the forward line, where coach Fabio Capello now has another option in tall Norwegian John Carew.

rest of us were only to discover much later. Namely, that Mancini was not only a fabulous player but also one of that small number of top-class players capable of thinking, talking and coaching football, on and off the field. Mancini is a coach who really gets players to play for him.

Not surprisingly, when Lazio struggled to reshape themselves last spring in the wake of the financial meltdown that struck the Cirio Group (prompting Cragnotti's eventual exit and the sale of his majority shareholding), the men in charge of the 'refoundation' – lawyer Ugo Longo and director Luca Baraldi – identified Mancini as priority No 1 for the club.

Remarkably, Lazio have held on to not only Mancini but also all their most important players, even strengthening the squad with such as midfielder Demetrio Albertini (Atletico Madrid), striker Roberto Muzzi (Udinese) and French midfielder Ousmane Dabo (Atalanta), as well as welcoming back Portuguese winger Sergio Conceicao (Internazionale).

In theory, then, all is set for a fantastic season, with Lazio repeating the sparkling form and entertaining football that took them into fourth place in Serie A last season. That certainly seemed to be the case when they opened up the season with five successive wins, defeating Benfica (home and away) and Besiktas (away) in the Champions League as well as Lecce and Sampdoria in the League.

'Mancini was not only a fabulous player, but also one of a select few capable of thinking, talking and coaching football, both on and off the field'

However, that run came to an abrupt halt on the third day of the Serie A campaign in a 3-2 home defeat by an exciting young Parma side. Lazio had twice come from behind only to lose out to a late winner.

Despite defensive lapses, Lazio's display had been positive. However, in Italy there is nothing positive about a defeat and the hangover was still raging when they travelled to Empoli. The Serie A minnows had just been skinned 5-1 by Juventus and 4-0 by promoted Siena and were in disarray. But although the Romans strolled all over them before taking the lead through Stankovic, they then switched to sleep mode. Empoli got back into the game in the second half and even went ahead, 2-1. To their credit, Lazio responded with a storming finish that brought an 86th-minute equaliser from Fiore.

The impression they might not always be 100 per cent focused was confirmed three days later when they again had to come from behind to earn a 2-2 Champions League home draw with Sparta Prague.

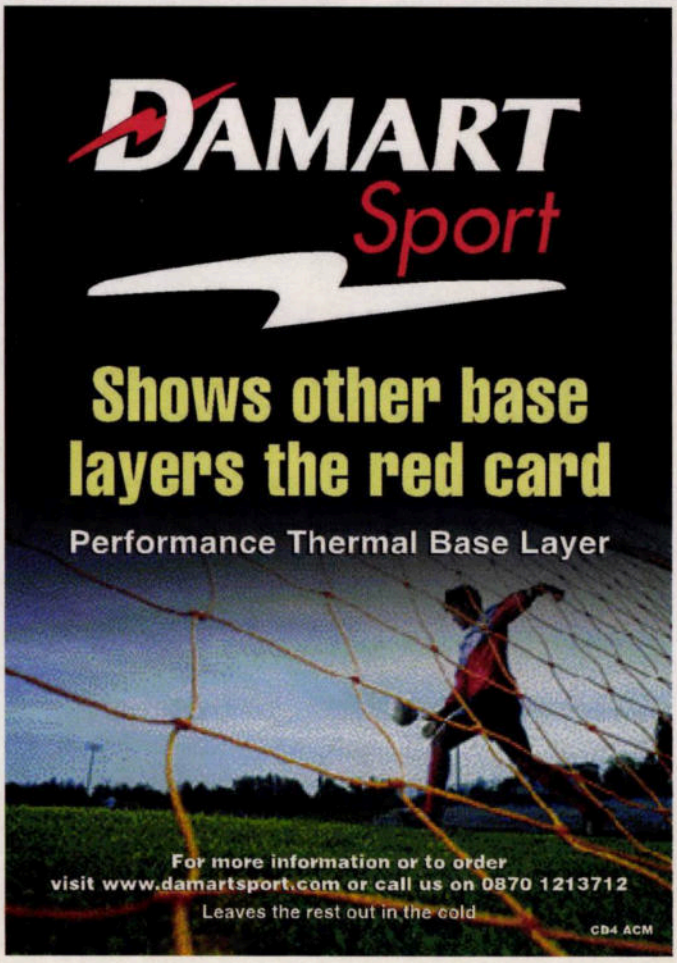
For opponents hoping to put one over on Lazio, encouraging pointers have already emerged. For a start, Stam's defensive qualities are not always matched by those of his colleagues. Mihajlovic, to be fair, does more than compensate with his stupendous free-kicks and corners.

In midfield, Albertini is still capable of dictating a game even though he tends to be one of the first players substituted by Mancini midway through the second half. Playmaker Fabio Liverani tends to start more games on the bench because he has yet to find that self-confidence and incisive passing that marked his rise at Perugia.

In attack, although Simone Inzaghi has already scored in both Champions League and Serie A, Claudio Lopez, Muzzi and Bernardo Corradi have looked less prolific.

While it is true that Lazio have shortcomings, it is always possible Mancini will bond the team together again this season. If so, then they are quite capable of forming a whole far superior to the sum of their individual parts. From Stamford Bridge to Prague's Letna stadium, you have been warned.

Trooping the colours...Lazio fans get right behind their team



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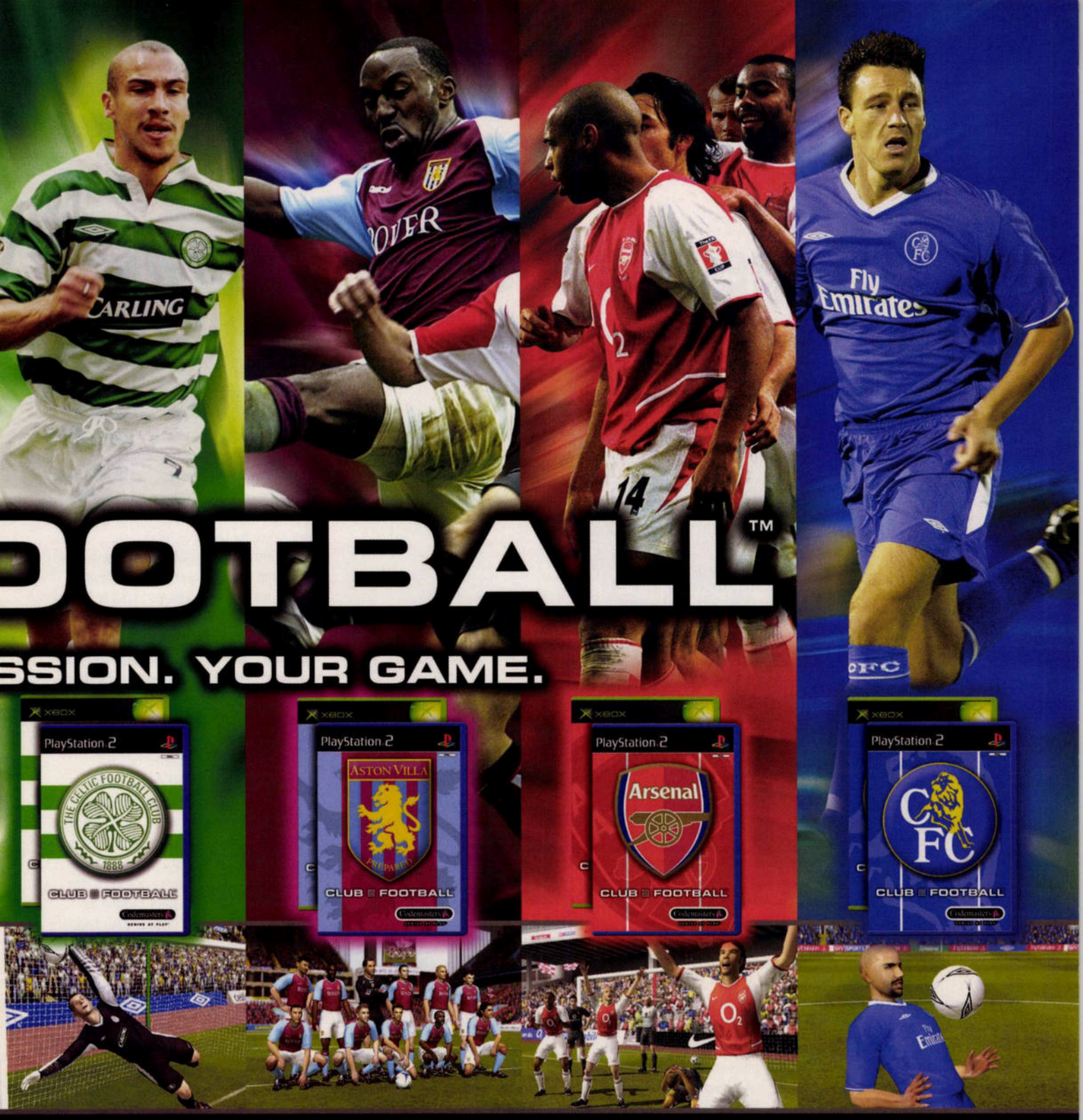

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Keir Radnedge **COMMENTARY**

The people show their power

Supporters are playing a bigger part in whether managers stay or go

Haunted by failure...Hoddle was the manager the Spurs fans wanted but it didn't work out

MANAGERS. Can't live with them, can't live without them. Ranieri, Hoddle, Reid, Pacheco, Eriksson – all of them caught in this highly-paid trap between idiosyncratic directors and caring or careless fans.

Claudio Ranieri at Chelsea was being tipped as the first Premiership manager for the sack because he had too many wonderful toys with which to tinker, and critics underestimated his ability to get the best out of them so quickly.

Thus Ranieri remains, doubtless enjoying himself more than at any time since he took the gamble of quitting the Latin European maelstrom for an adventure in a country where he didn't speak the language. Chelsea appear a far more dangerous threat far more quickly to the likes of Manchester United and Arsenal than anyone had dare predict. Funny, then, that they look much more ill at ease in Europe.

Glenn Hoddle, once Chelsea had a few points under their belt, swiftly became favourite to be sacked first, and this time the bookies were not wrong. Usually the departure of a failing manager puts a smile on fans' faces but the reaction at Tottenham was more funereal, given Hoddle's wonderful contribution as a player.

Also, of course, he had been the manager the fans had wanted and got. As Spurs-supporting broadcaster Danny Kelly noted: "Usually when a manager's doing badly the fans want to sack the board for appointing him. In Spurs' case, the fans should have been jumping up and down chanting: 'Sack us!'"

Hoddle has been wearing that fraught, haunted expression ever since he was hounded out of the England job for his unguarded expression of opinion about reincarnation. He always reminded me of (then plain) Bobby Robson in his darkest days as England manager.

Dithering chairman

Hoddle's quietus was apparently delivered by telephone from a honeymooning chairman. But at least he was put out of his misery quickly and decisively. Poor Peter Reid was a dead man walking after the humiliating treatment dished out by Leeds' still-trying-to-understand-football chairman Professor John McKenzie.

In a way, you have to feel sorry for McKenzie, who may be an intellectual and industrial superstar but has been revealed as charmingly naive in football terms.

We have banged on for years about the need for proper qualifications for managers. Maybe it's time similar qualification barriers were raised for club directors.

McKenzie was spectacularly outmanoeuvred, weeks into his reign over the Harry Kewell transfer fee. He then dithered in public for the best part of a week over whether to keep faith with Reid. That was a bit rich, considering McKenzie's original stated intention had been to propel Leeds towards solvency – meaning disposing of all the best elements of Reid's playing staff. To then blame the manager for poor results was basically buck-passing.

McKenzie, having dithered out of a meeting with his high-flier deputy Allan Leighton, then passed the Reid buck to the fans, who knew exactly where the blame lay for Leeds' plight – and it was not with the former England midfielder.

Boardroom incompetence got the blame for Jaime Pacheco's fast-track sacking by Mallorca. He had barely unpacked his bags after arriving from successful years with Boavista than he was being sent home. As Michel, former Real Madrid midfielder turned columnist, said: "It wasn't his fault that various directors had different objectives and impatient ambitions. If you don't want to give a good man time to do his job, don't hire him in the first place." Certainly, the fans were hardly storming the ramparts of San Moix demanding Pacheco's head.

So, in these days of City-slicker, corporate control in the boardroom, the fans suddenly appear to matter more not less, as had been feared. Chelsea fans demonstrably and volubly do NOT want Sven Goran Eriksson (but only because Ranieri won them over); Spurs fans wanted Hoddle (and got him, for all the good it did); Leeds fans kept Reid in a job (while the chairman dithered).

Oh yes, and then Eriksson invoked the fan vote by threatening to walk out on England if there was trouble in Istanbul.

Power to the people, indeed.

Dictating the game, Fascist-style

The documentary *Fascism and Football* deserved far better than to be hidden away in the late-night digital shadowlands on BBC Four. The contention of the hour-long programme was that Hitler, Mussolini and Franco used the game ruthlessly to pursue their own political ends.

The C-word – 'corruption' – was scattered around the commentary as if the producers were desperate to justify the original sale. But it didn't need the heavy-handed stuff. The major fascination was the sight of film clips from the 1930s which were new to me – even material from the 1934 World Cup.

Mussolini's determination to use that tournament to sell his creed was the best illustrated; Franco's link to Real Madrid the weakest – at one stage the commentary suggested virtually that Franco had created the European Cup as a vehicle through which Madrid could promote his 'new' Spain.

There were several other scripting gaffes, but overall it was a fascinating programme. I hope there will be a follow-up pointing out how Communist dictators milked the game equally ruthlessly – just think of all those match-fixed army and secret police clubs, from Dukla Prague to Dynamo Berlin.

Dredging up a storm...Rio Ferdinand (right)

Rio and responsibility

THE RIO FERDINAND dope test issue has ramifications that will fuel radio phone-ins for ages. But it was impossible to resist a smile at the thought of Manchester United bringing in lawyers to fight for the defender's right to play for his country.

More seriously, one issue links the Ferdinand matter, the 'soccer rape' case and the Liverpool shooting (when a reserve defender caught a bullet in the buttocks while out drinking with friends).

Football clubs, in their determination to divest players of every responsibility except that of playing winning football, keep those same players in a state of irresponsibly child-like innocence.

Sir Alex Ferguson, to be fair, tried to keep a tight grip on the off-field activities of the teenage Ryan Giggs and has promised the same for Cristiano Ronaldo, but he can only be in one place at once: David Beckham, clearly, outgrew the Ferguson shackles long ago.

English football has been very slow in coming to terms with the drink culture, while any top player knows that even those minor items of expenditure a club does not underwrite will be picked up by his agent. Book a table at a restaurant? Arrange to test-drive a new Ferrari? Ask, it will be done.

That was the other hilarious aside from Ferdinand's dope test lapse: the thought that it slipped his mind because he was moving house that day. Did Rio personally put the books and cushions in the tea chests; roll up the rugs; wrap up the china; lift it all and stagger to the lorries? Maybe. Maybe not.

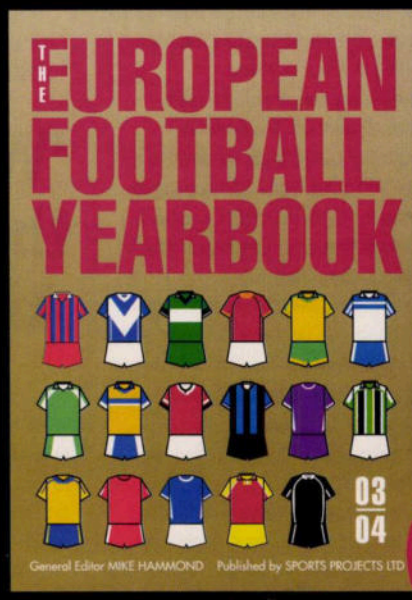
Women's game knocked back

WHAT NOW for women's soccer? The United States was supposed to be the leader in the professional revolution but first the Women's United Soccer Association collapsed – embarrassingly, three days before the start of the World Cup finals in the USA – then the hosts lost 2-0 to Germany in the semi-finals.

True, for the health of the women's game at the top level the US needed serious challengers. But its failure at league and competitive levels was discouraging for the movement internationally.

The Americans' World Cup triumph in Pasadena in 1999 sparked the fervour. Players such as Michele Akers, Mia Hamm, Julie Foudy and Brandi Chastain became sporting and commercial icons overnight, and WUSA was created to feed off that success. Foreign players brought on board included China's outstanding Sun Wen, and eight teams were set up across the States. Now more than 50 of the players who appeared at the Women's World Cup count among the WUSA redundancies.

WUSA suspended operations after failing to find major sponsors to fill a £12.5 million void. Chief executive Lynn Morgan always acknowledged the risk that women's professional soccer might possess only short-term novelty value. She was more of a realist than FIFA president Sepp Blatter, who prophesied that "in the 21st century, football will be feminine".



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Favourite son

Danny Jordaan talks exclusively to Keir Radnedge about South Africa's bid to host the 2010 World Cup

DANNY JORDAAN IS back in sight on the World Cup circuit. He has never really been away. But now it's getting high profile again with Africa's 2010 hosting candidates having handed in their dossiers and started the countdown to the decisive FIFA executive meeting next May.

Jordaan led the controversially unsuccessful South African bid for the 2006 finals. Defeat in memorably bitter circumstances was a shattering professional and personal blow.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter was prepared to lay his casting vote in South Africa's favour if the executive split down the middle between the Jordaanaires and Franz Beckenbauer's Germany. As the process neared a climax, however, New Zealand's Charles Dempsey packed his bags for home, citing mysterious personal threats.

Logically, the developing world delegate from Oceania should have voted for Africa. But Dempsey's abstention gave Germany the edge by one vote and Blatter's casting vote remained passive rather than active.

Jordaan believes that it was the furore, not to say scandal, raised by that vote that pushed FIFA into committing the World Cup to a rotation system starting in Africa in 2010.

Quite how many bids are on the table remains open to question. The confusion surrounding the documentation handover in Zurich at the end of September did nothing to ease the concerns of those officials, sponsors, media critics and fans who question whether an African nation is up to the job.

If Jordaan resents being tarred with that generalistic brush – as he surely must – he hides his irritation diplomatically. But then, he has had plenty of practice over the past six years.

Egypt is one certain contender, so is Morocco. Nigeria appears to have pulled out, however; its bid had come under heavy domestic attack, which appeared to prevail when former star player and bid director Segun Odegbami conceded that the country's delegation could not afford the flights to Zurich and "may have to send our bid document by post".

The joint Libya-Tunisia bid also foundered after FIFA cautioned them that, following the painful and expensive experience of Korea and Japan, it would not countenance another joint bid – at least for a very long time. Tunisia and Libya could bid individually but Al-Saadi Ghaddafi's co-hosting scenario has crashed.

Jordaan keeps his own counsel on that one. But he knows that he need not worry overmuch about the opposition as long as he sells South Africa's overwhelming case efficiently enough.

Not that he claims any advantage from the last close-run struggle. "It's like the FA Cup Final," he says. "If you are the losers then it doesn't mean you are going to be given any sort of preferential treatment the following year. You go right back to the third round – to square one – and have to start all over again."

Of course, lessons have been learned, and the context has changed in two important ways.

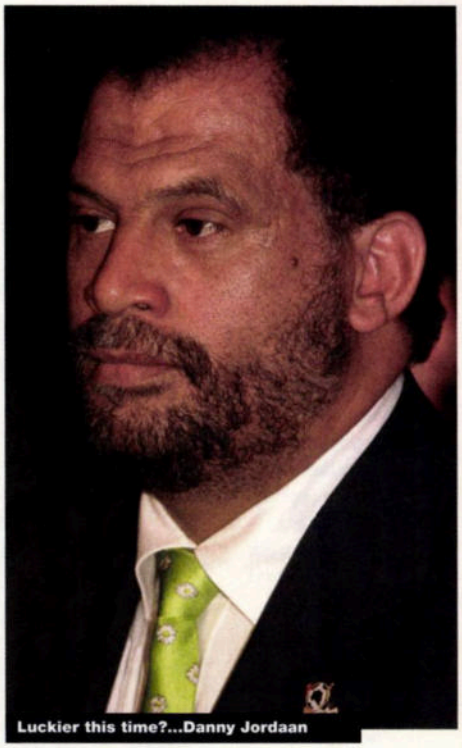
"First," says Jordaan, "we don't have to convince the world why coming to Africa at all is such a great idea, so we can concentrate on the strength of our bid. FIFA has committed to Africa. There is no turning back. That's helpful also because it means we don't have to go head-to-head against the great traditional powers of world football, like Germany or England.

"Secondly, the emphasis has changed subtly but perceptively. Bidding for this World Cup demands much more emphasis than in the past on the financial aspects of the tournament."

Jordaan's analysis is not critical of 'new FIFA' – merely an honest appreciation of the changing demands FIFA has made of itself in its quest to invest heavily in worldwide development programmes. He explains: "You have to go back to events before the last World Cup finals and the financial disaster that was threatened by the collapse of both ISL and then Kirch.

"At the same time, FIFA has become much more of a direct investor in capital projects – and that demands much greater awareness and control of revenue generating projects. The way that impacts on the World Cup is that FIFA needs to hit guaranteed financial targets – because the World Cup profits have to underwrite all these expensive projects over a four-year period."

FIFA and the South Africans have commissioned separate economic surveys and comparisons. No worries for Jordaan here. Every graph and statistic within range underscores South Africa's vast economic superiority. Jordaan is confident about superior infrastructure as well. He says: "We are not talking promises here. We are talking infrastructure already in place: quality stadia and training centres, hotel accommodation, travel links, security, information technology, every sort of medium to keep the fans involved, right down to the marketing, ticketing and hospitality operations which will generate more income."


Luckier this time?...Danny Jordaan

'We don't have to convince the world why coming to Africa is such a great idea'

Jordaan remains, however, a realist. He knows that to make the most of an African hosting the entire continent will need to get behind the eventual winners. He is not so confident about harnessing and organising the African enthusiasm for football.

"To make the most of an event you have to start early," he says. "Getting people on your side, promoting the World Cup, getting local business on board, while also attracting the outside investment to excite people's perceptions about football. We need everyone to pull together, and I am not quite sure how that will turn out."

This is one area in which the Confederation of African Football could be working powerfully behind the scenes. However, Jordaan says: "CAF could play an important role but, for whatever

reason, it won't. It's a terrible shame. During the 2006 bid I asked CAF to use its influence to pick between us and Morocco so there could be no danger of splitting votes when it came to FIFA executive. So what happened? Nothing.

"I understand that it's not easy for CAF. The World Cup is FIFA's 'property' so it's perfectly correct that FIFA should choose the hosts rather than delegate it to the regional confederation. FIFA has a great responsibility to maintain the standards of World Cup administration, so that has to be done direct from Zurich.

"But perhaps CAF could have played a role as go-between, helping to evaluate the various African bids and perhaps stopping short any bids that were more of an embarrassment to African football than a good advertisement.

"With 52 members CAF is one of the biggest confederations within FIFA but it has little or no influence in the big decisions. In fact, as the last World Cup showed, it has been overtaken by Asia in terms of both influence and affluence."

Nations Cup complaint

One change Jordaan demands of CAF is to alter the biennial cycle of the African Nations Cup. He says: "No African team that have done well at the Nations Cup have gone on to do well at the World Cup," he says. "Look at Cameroon in 2002. They won the Nations Cup and were then eliminated in the first round of the World Cup. Players cannot wind themselves up for two major tournaments within four months.

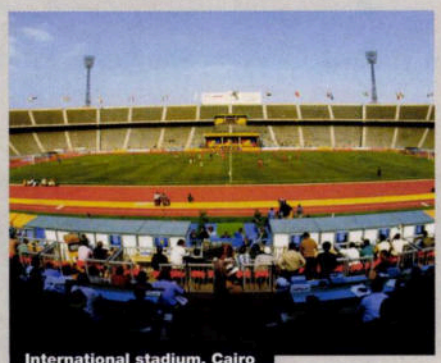
"If they do well in the Nations Cup they are still emotionally drained when they go to the World Cup – and that's without the extra pressure put on the players by some of the administrative incompetence."

With CAF or without CAF, South Africa presents a powerful bid for 2010. It knows that Morocco and Egypt have the greater World Cup tradition, but Jordaan is delighted with FIFA's redirected emphasis on economic factors and confident with the infrastructure already in place.

"Economically, South Africa is by far the biggest country in Africa and, in my opinion, Africa's best prospect for a successful World Cup."

Then Jordaan pauses, and thinks back to Zurich in summer 2000. "Of course," he adds, "political factors also come in to play, as they did the last time. But this time I hope and pray we will not need to depend on what the president of FIFA may or may not want to do with his casting vote."

2010 – THE BIDS

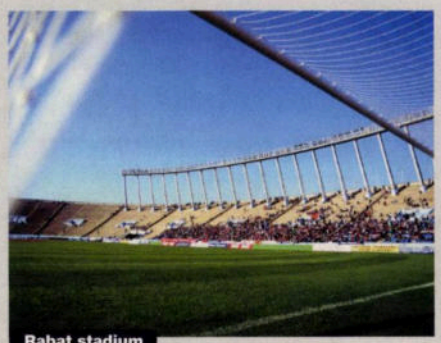

International stadium, Cairo

EGYPT

Federation founded 1921
Joined FIFA 1923
World Cup appearances 1934 (1st rnd), 1990 (1st rnd)
African Nations Cup hosts 1959, 1974, 1986
Main stadiums International, Cairo (100,000); Arab Contractors, Cairo (60,000); Ismailia (30,000)
For and against Egypt believes it has history on its side as one of the oldest African federations, the first African finalists and as host to the headquarters of the African confederation. Egypt has staged the Nations Cup three times, and clubs such as Al Ahly and Zamalek are regular participants in the African club finals. Cairo's 'Media City' is one of the centrepieces of the infrastructure, and the tourist industry means a high rate of hotel accommodation, with more than five million visitors per year. Officials reject suggestions that Egypt might be subject to more security problems than most countries in the region.

MOROCCO

Federation founded 1955
Joined FIFA 1959
World Cup appearances 1970 (1st rnd), 1986 (2nd rnd), 1994 (1st rnd), 1998 (1st rnd)
African Nations Cup hosts 1988
Main stadiums Mohamed V, Casablanca (80,000); Rabat (80,000); Marrakesh (40,000)
For and against This is the fourth time Morocco has campaigned for World Cup hosting rights, and federation and government officials believe, on that basis alone, that the country deserves selection. Moroccan clubs have featured prominently in African competitions and the national team have appeared at the World Cup finals on four occasions. A four-year development plan is already ensuring heavy investment in stadiums. Work has just started in Marrakesh and Tangiers, while the new Agadir stadium will be ready in December. Officials estimate the World Cup would help swell tourism numbers to 10 million, for which the present hotel capacity will need to be more than doubled. It is also estimated that the World Cup would generate 350,000 jobs.


Rabat stadium

LIBYA

Federation founded 1962
Joined FIFA 1963
World Cup appearances none
African Nations Cup hosts 1982
Main stadium June 11, Tripoli (70,000)
For and against Libya is staging an aggressive campaign to join the football establishment amid a wider policy of seeking to normalise international relations and rid itself of the 'rogue state' reputation. Al-Saadi Ghaddafi, son of the Libyan leader, is the driving force behind the country's football diplomacy as vice-president of the federation, a past shareholder in Juventus and a player with Perugia. He has also considered challenging Issa Hayatou for the Confederation of African Football presidency. Ghaddafi still hopes to persuade FIFA to look favourably on a co-hosting bid with neighbouring Tunisia.

FNB stadium, Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA

Federation founded 1991
Joined FIFA 1992
World Cup appearances 1998 (1st rnd), 2002 (1st rnd)
African Nations Cup hosts 1996
Main stadiums FNB, Johannesburg (78,000); Kings Park, Durban (56,000); Port Elizabeth (40,000)
For and against South Africa has been back in the international football fold for only 12 years, a factor that has counted against it in the past. South Africa lost by one vote for the right to host the 2006 finals but officials believe they have an even stronger bid this time. FIFA's multinational World Cup sponsors are considered to be strongly in favour of South Africa because of its economic strength and potential. Bid ambassadors include former stars such as Abedi Pele (Ghana) and Kalusha Bwalya (Zambia).

TUNISIA

Federation founded 1956
Joined FIFA 1960
World Cup appearances 1978 (1st rnd), 1998 (1st rnd), 2002 (1st rnd)
African Nations Cup hosts 1965, 1994 (plus 2004)
Main stadiums El Menzah, Tunis (40,000); Zouiten, Tunis (35,000)
For and against Tunisia has enormous pride in its football tradition but appears to have entered the bidding hoping to ally itself in a co-hosting bid with any one of its North African neighbours. In the end Libya, with which it shares a border, proposed a joint bid but this concept has been rejected by FIFA.

Air supremacy

Brian Glanville on Tommy Lawton, the great England centre-forward

Full Monty...Lawton shakes hands with Field Marshall Montgomery before England's 1948 game against Scotland

TOMMY LAWTON in his prime was a majestic centre-forward. As a teenager with Burnley – his native Bolton had somehow contrived to overlook him – he combined his playing role with that of office boy, answering the phone and even fielding calls about his own availability from other clubs.

Lawton tells us in his autobiography, *Football Is My Business*, that he had the delightfully ironic task of logging enquiries from Arsenal, Wolves, Everton, Newcastle and Manchester City all on the same morning.

The autobiography also tells an amusing tale of Lawton arriving in Liverpool having signed for Everton. He was recognised by a tram conductor, who told him bluntly: "You'll never be as good as Dean." Dean of course being Dixie Dean, the renowned Everton centre-forward, so formidable in the air – as would Lawton be himself.

Lawton spoke of his amiable reception by Dean: "As soon as Dixie saw me, he put his arm round my shoulder and, drawing me aside, said: 'Youngster, you've come here to take my place. Anything I can do for you, I will.'"

'At Chelsea he showed superb power in the air – he really did seem to hang there'

In due course, Dean moved out and on, Lawton established himself at centre-forward and in October 1938, still aged only 19, won his first England cap against Wales in Cardiff. The Welsh beat England 4-2, but Lawton scored one of the goals and was to keep his place in the team for many a year to come.

When war began, he "had become a leading cog in a great football side. I had won a First Division championship medal and by virtue of my international recognition had become the leading centre-forward in England." Like most leading pro players, Lawton found himself in the Army Physical Training Corps, largely based at Aldershot. There he played for the local ex-Third Division South team, along with his great pal Frank Swift in goal and the whole of the Britton-Cullis-Mercer half-back line.

In 1945, with the war just over, he unexpectedly left Everton for Chelsea for a fee of £11,500. His marriage "just wasn't working out, in fact it was purgatory," and he hoped that leaving the north of England would revive it. When he told Theo Kelly, Everton's manager, he wanted to go, the response was amazing. "Well," said Kelly, "let me tell you we've been trying to give you away for four months and nobody wants you!" Those were the days at Everton when even star players were feudally treated.

So to Chelsea, where his superb power in the air – he really did at times seem to hang there – his two-footed shooting, his strength and his adroit ball control made him as formidable a striker as ever. He headed a notable goal in the famous 3-3 home draw against Dinamo Moscow.

Why then at his peak and in his prime did Lawton join Notts County in 1947? His explanation was that he was a close friend of the ex-Chelsea masseur Arthur Stollery and told him that if ever Stollery became a manager with sufficient funds he'd be glad to join him. Join him he did for the then record fee of £20,000.

Twice as a boarding school boy I recall cycling 10 miles each way to watch him play for County against Aldershot. On the first occasion he hardly moved. On the second his head brought a goal.

Having scored four of England's 10 against Portugal in May 1947 he continued to be capped for some time; notably, he played for England, and scored, in their 4-0 victory over Italy in Turin in 1948.

In 1950 County were promoted to Division Two, but then Stollery, alas, was sacked. Lawton divorced his wife, was himself cited in a divorce, left County – things had gone sour – for Brentford in March 1952, even had a spell with Arsenal, and became manager of Notts County in 1957. Again things turned sour. On either side of this appointment he'd had spells as manager of Southern League side Kettering, the first more successful than the second.

Nowadays, a player of Lawton's great stature would be a multi-millionaire. Then, he drifted from one unsuccessful job to another until he was finally obliged to solicit loans, which he seldom if ever repaid. But former stars who'd played with him as youngsters, such as Jackie Sewell, didn't grudge him a penny. Cheques bounced, court appearances were made, prison narrowly avoided. A kindly editor of the local Nottingham paper, Barrie Williams, brightened Lawton's last years in the 1980s, when at least he escaped from humiliating poverty.

Wouldn't Roman Abramovich have been pleased to have such a centre-forward at Chelsea now!

WS WORLD SOCCER November 1979

'Berti Vogts had just been voted West Germany's Footballer of the Year despite having retired the previous June'

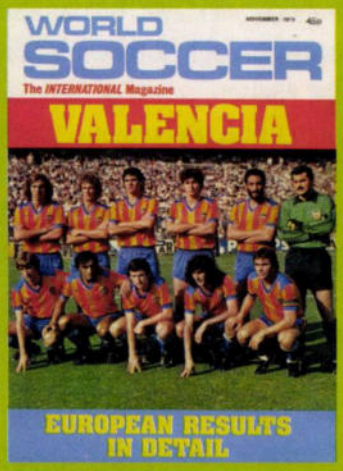
WEST GERMANY'S leading players were eyeing moves to Italy 24 years ago as the Italian authorities prepared to lift their ban on foreigners.

Hansi Muller of Stuttgart and Bayern Munich's Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and Dieter Hoeness all suggested they would be interested in such a move, although under EEC rules clubs would be limited to one foreigner. Their possible departures would reduce the number of current or former West German internationals playing in the Bundesliga from the record number of 60.

One player who would not be going to Italy was Berti Vogts, just voted West Germany's Footballer of the Year despite having retired the previous June to become coach of the national youth teams.

"The ghost of Cruyff" was the headline on a report about Ajax's troubles since winning the Dutch League and Cup earlier in the year. Manager Cor Brom had departed and English centre-forward Ray Clarke sold to Club Brugge. "It's almost as if the bitterness of [Holland's] World Cup Final defeat by Argentina had spilled over to infect the succeeding months," wrote Keir Radnedge.

Elsewhere in the issue, Brian Glanville saw little light on the horizon for soccer in America having just returned from a trip to the States. He wrote: "The North American Soccer League continues to make a shuffling progress towards higher standards – less one step forward, two steps back than a kind of shuffling advance – but of native American players coming forward in numbers, there is pitifully little sign."



Building the dream team

World Soccer constructs a global XI of world-beaters

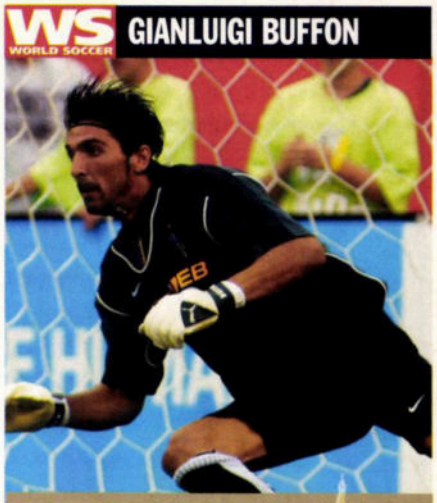
EVER WONDERED WHAT jobs some of the world's best players might have been doing if they were not being paid millions to play football?

It's hard to see Paolo Maldini as a hairdresser or Ronaldo as a bus driver, but many players and managers have had other careers before experiencing success on the football pitch.

England's 1966 World Cup goalkeeper Gordon Banks was an apprentice bricklayer. Bulgaria's Hristo Stoichkov supervised the construction of a hotel while winding down his playing career. Richard Moller Nielsen, coach of Denmark's 1992 European Championship -winning side, worked as a joiner before becoming a coach.

So, what if some of the world's best players were to turn their hands to jobs in the construction industry? We've picked players who have been at the peak of their game over the past 12 months – and found new jobs for them.

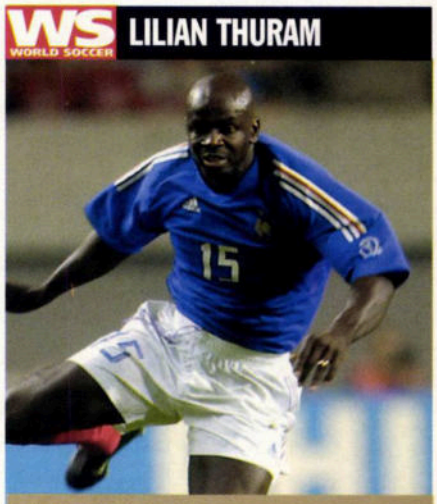
Here's *World Soccer's* world XI of alternative jobs for the boys...



GIANLUIGI BUFFON

THE GLAZIER

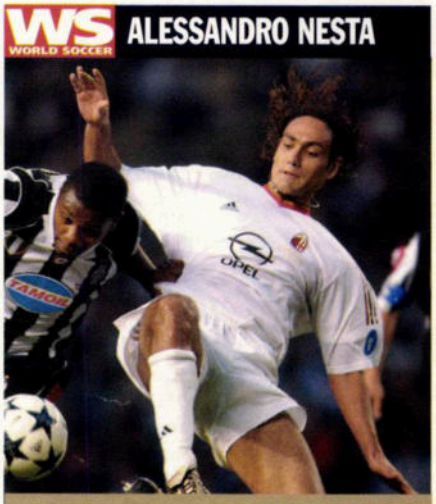
The Juventus and Italy No 1 is arguably the world's best goalkeeper – a safe pair of hands to handle fragile glass.



LILIAN THURAM

THE ROOFER

Nobody keeps the lid on opposing attackers better than the Juventus and France defender. With him in the line-up, his team are safe as houses.



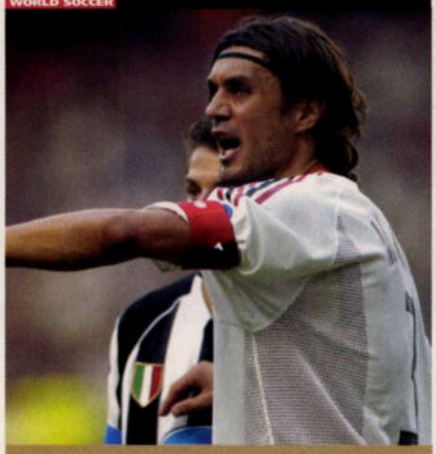
ALESSANDRO NESTA

THE SCAFFOLDER

Milan and Italy centre-back Nesta is a fearless defender with a head for heights. He'd provide the framework for the rest of the team to build on.

bconstructive
www.bconstructive.co.uk.

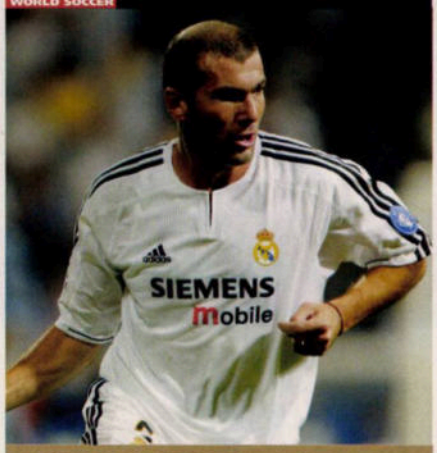
PAOLO MALDINI



THE BRICKLAYER

Building from the back, supporting his team-mates with solid play, the veteran Milan captain can always be relied upon to deliver the goods.

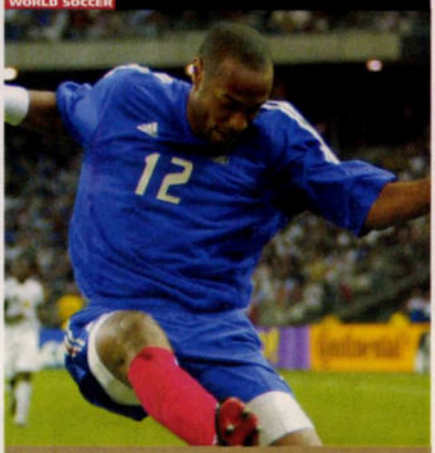
ZINEDINE ZIDANE



THE ARCHITECT

The Real Madrid and France midfielder has the ideas, inspiration and creative vision to see a project through from start to finish.

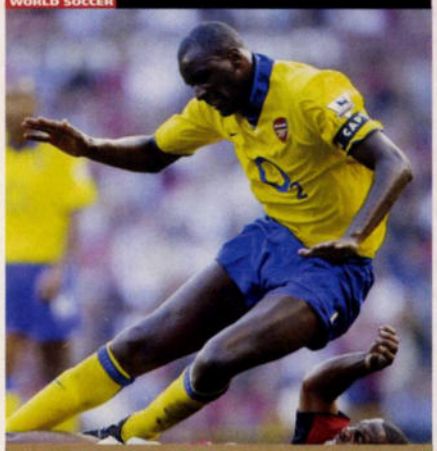
THIERRY HENRY



THE PLASTERER

A smooth operator, Arsenal and France forward Henry provides the finishing touch to every move.

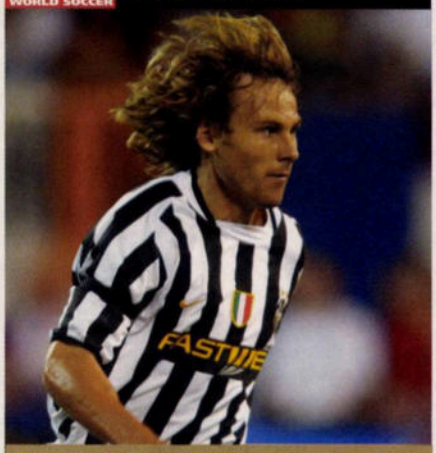
PATRICK VIEIRA



TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The Arsenal and France midfielder is always on hand to advise his team-mates and guide his teams out of trouble.

PAVEL NEDVED



THE ENGINEER

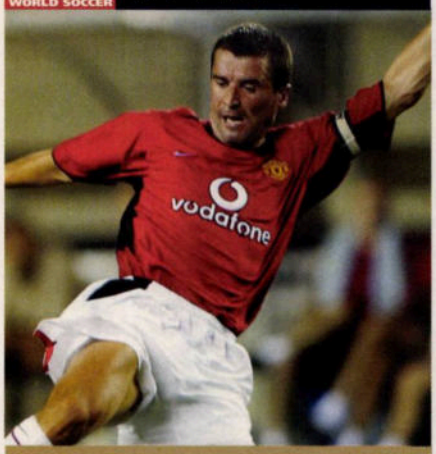
The Juventus and Czech Republic star pulls the strings in midfield, helping to keep his team-mates moving with constructive passes all over the pitch.

RONALDO

THE ELECTRICIAN

The current World Player of the Year is a dazzling forward who adds spark to every attack.

ROY KEANE



DEMOLITION MAN

The Manchester United captain plays the simple game, protecting his defence, but is not afraid to smash into opposition midfielders when necessary.

RAUL

THE CARPENTER

With his outstanding pace and ability to operate from tight angles, the Real Madrid and Spain star can cut through the toughest defences.

PICK A JOB FOR THE STARS...

WHICH FOOTBALLER do you think would make a good construction industry worker and why? Let us know at www.worldsoccer.com. The 10 best suggestions to reach us by November 14 will each win a copy of the *World Soccer Yearbook*.

If you want to know more about the careers the stars could be doing, take a look at www.bconstructive.co.uk or call freephone 0808 100 0055. Around 76,000 people are going to be needed in the UK construction industry in each of the next five years. There are opportunities for everyone from apprentices to graduates in many different skills and trades. There will be work for engineers, architects, carpenters, bricklayers, scaffolders and many others. There's more to these positions than meets the eye!

No way out

Administration is no longer a solution to ending a club's debts. Howard Johnson reports

FROM NEXT SEASON clubs in England's lower divisions will be docked a massive 10 points should they go into administration. The move is the Football League's attempt to address a situation that has threatened to rip the game apart at the lower levels.

After years of solidarity where the heart has ruled the head and fans have seen the 'saving' of any club by any means as a triumph of good over evil, football folk are now wising up to the fact that the lackadaisical rules governing clubs imprudent in fiscal management could well have created a playing field that is now anything but level.

"There seems to be a growing perception that one way to get out from under accumulated debt is to go into administration, get rid of the debt and come out again. The difficulty is that it has created competitive tensions between clubs." So said Football League chairman Sir Brian Mawhinney in April, and he's been proved right.

In October Ipswich manager Joe Royle openly criticised the situation that had allowed Leicester City to lay off non-playing staff while in administration, yet under new ownership come out with their playing staff pretty much intact and thereby clinch promotion back to the cash-rich Premiership. Sheffield United manager Neil Warnock even went so far as to call Leicester's debt reconstruction "immoral". You can see his point.

Ipswich opted to sell or release many of their best players to reduce debt and have since languished far outside the top flight, so the argument is that the situation has given less responsible clubs an unfair advantage.

Nottingham Forest sold their most talented player, Jermaine Jenas, to Newcastle specifically to avoid going into administration. Since then Forest have struggled in their bid to return to the Premiership. Prudent business sense has clearly harmed the club on the field. Yet clubs that have not cashed in on their player assets have been able to negotiate debt downwards relatively easily. After all, creditors are often more likely to accept less than they are actually owed rather than risk having to fight it out for whatever surplus money may be around should the endebted club actually go out of business.

"The Football League, commendably, is trying to take a lead in ensuring 'phoenix' clubs don't leave creditors and angry competitors in their wake as they shake off debt and soar up the League," says consultants Deloitte & Touche. "Administration should not be the equivalent of a snake shedding its skin."

Standing together...Leicester City supporters got behind the club during their financial crisis last season

Directors accountable

Mawhinney believes sporting sanctions will help make club directors more accountable to supporters for the way they have run their clubs.

"This will help foster a more sustainable approach to managing football clubs, which ultimately will reduce the number needing to enter administration," he says.

With clubs permitted by the Football League to remain in administration for a maximum 18 months, this all sounds good. Clubs will, of course, have a right to appeal against these sanctions, but only where their insolvency has been brought about by events that are deemed unforeseeable and unavoidable. This is known as *force majeure*.

This would appear to be a potential grey area, however. Which committee decides exactly what constitutes unforeseeable events? All that the Football League will say right now is that it will be independent and that

an appeal process for the clubs will be in place.

And won't it be easy for any club to put up a reasonable argument against whatever decision is taken by that committee? Would the collapse of ITV Digital, generally blamed (rightly or wrongly) as the catalyst for financial meltdown in the English lower leagues, have been regarded as 'unforeseeable' and 'unavoidable'?

But if that were the case, wouldn't such a situation end up penalising the more fiscally prudent clubs? The ones who maybe didn't bet the entire farm on buying players whose wages they patently couldn't afford in the belief that TV money would cover them?

One thing is clear, however. Going into administration has yet to herald the complete demise of a single English football club. Indeed, Huddersfield, Ipswich, Port Vale, York City, Leicester, Bradford City and Carlisle have recently emerged from administration and most of them appear to be in at least a slightly ruder state of health for it.

This is good news for Barnsley, Wimbledon, Oldham and Luton, four clubs currently trying to fight their way out of administration – but may not be anywhere near as heartening for the League's oldest club, Notts County.

"As soon as a football club goes into administration," explains the Football League's John Nagle, "we withdraw its membership, but suspend it while the club goes through the process of trying to rescue itself. But if it is not out of administration after 18 months the withdrawal comes into force." Notts County run out of time in December and if they haven't put their house in order by then, well…

Football clubs have not, by and large, abided by the traditional rules of business engagement. Because these clubs were born out of passion, of heart and of soul, there has almost always appeared to be someone willing to dip into their own pocket to keep them afloat. We shouldn't forget that the intentions of these traditionally local businessmen weren't always entirely altruistic in the past, though.

The kudos of owning the local team would often have a beneficial knock-on effect on the owner's business, and gate receipts could be fiddled relatively easily to allow cash to be siphoned off. But there has pretty much always been someone willing to take on the job of running a club. Administrators bank on the fact that there always will be.

Football is an industry

But will this 'divine intervention' continue indefinitely? Agent Jon Smith thinks not. "You can't call football a game any more," he says. "That's a real misnomer. It's the football industry.

"In every part of life, particularly in the UK, there has been dynamic social change in the last 10 years. Football isn't immune from that and going forward it will be very much an industry.

"The fact that there's been a football team in Halifax or wherever for all these years is fine, so long as they can make it pay. But if it can't make its way in the First, or Second, or Third Division, then, unfortunately, it's got to go. Club financial management will become more commensurate with industry than sport."

Maybe not at the top of the pile, where there will most likely always be a gazillionaire such as Roman Abramovich ready to wipe out a club's debts at the stroke of a pen for the fun and prestige of running a major football club.

Further down the food chain, though, this is a clear and present danger. It may not be this year or next year for most clubs, but the reality – as Notts County know only too well – is that time is finally running out.

Administration is no longer a soft option for those trying to hold on to their playing staff, or a guaranteed means of salvation. From next season administration really could signal the beginning of the end.

'If a club does not come out of administration in 18 months we will withdraw its membership'

Football League spokesman John Nagle

Guernsey Press

Chance of a lifetime...the Sark team were none the worse for their experience

Small wonder

Tiny island side concede 70 goals in four games

SARK HAD A baptism of fire on their international debut – at the 2003 Island Games, a biennial tournament contested by some of the world's smallest islands. Their record in Guernsey and Alderney was: Played 4, won 0, drew 0, lost 4, goals for 0, goals against 70.

But the players' heroic endeavours meant they were applauded off the pitch after every game by the spectators and opponents alike.

The tranquil Channel Island of Sark is the smallest independent state in the Commonwealth and the last feudal state in Europe. Some 22 miles west of the Normandy coast of France and eight miles east of Guernsey, Sark is only three miles long and one and a half wide. Cars are banned, so transport takes the form of bicycles and horse-drawn carriages. The only motor vehicles are tractors. And the population is just 550, from which the team was selected.

Sark made Island Games history by becoming the first team to fail to score. But coach Shane Moon summed up the spirit in the camp by saying: "It was a special occasion for our lads to enter the tournament. They will probably never do this again in their lifetimes. They enjoyed it and were happy in the dressing-rooms after matches because they achieved a lot."

Sark's most experienced player was 52-year-old former Huddersfield professional Barrie Dewsbury, who felt the Island Games were a fantastic experience. He said: "I never thought an old man like me could play in such a great tournament. When it was decided we would enter the Games, I came out of retirement. It was an opportunity not to be missed – even at my age."

The most one-sided match was the Isle of Wight's 20-0 rout of Sark at Blanche Pierre Lane in Guernsey. Apart from the goals, the IOW hit the woodwork six times, had a goal disallowed and had two penalties saved by Sark keeper Leon Burletson. He pulled off 20 other flying saves in a man-of-the-match performance. At the other end, IOW goalkeeper Richie Newbury touched the ball only once in the entire game – picking up an overhit clearance from the beleaguered Sark defence.

The 2003 Island Games may have been Sark's only adventure on to the international football stage, however. Logistical problems mean they are unlikely to enter the tournament again.

Richard Drewe, manager of the Sark Island Games sports team, explained: "We faced all sorts of selection difficulties. Most people on Sark are self-employed, so it was hard for the players to take a week off from work – especially in the tourist season. It was bad enough trying to find enough players for one team, let alone two so that they could have a training match in the build-up period."

But good news for followers of Sark football is that the island has applied to enter a team in the lower divisions of the Guernsey League for next season.

Tony Incenzo

HOLLAND

'Czechmate' sparks calls for change

UNLESS DRASTIC CHANGES are made, the national team won't be competing at Euro 2004. That's the general conclusion after Holland were outclassed by the Czech Republic in the deciding match for top spot in qualifying Group 3 and thus forced to take their chances in the play-offs.

The Dutch camp is in chaos, and coach Dick Advocaat doesn't seem to know what to do about the situation. His side may have gone into the game against the Czechs undefeated, but their performances in the previous few matches had been no better than mediocre.

Any remaining optimism about Holland qualifying automatically by winning in Prague vanished when Edgar Davids was sent off after 15 minutes – the eighth red card of his career – after committing three fouls in a row. The Czechs simply exploited the space that his dismissal provided, going on to win 3-1.

Advocaat insisted afterwards that "nobody has failed". But that merely showed the gulf between his view and that of the public. A national poll before the match showed the majority want him to drop Patrick Kluivert, Clarence Seedorf, Davids and Frank De Boer, and bring in young guns such as Arjen Robben or die-hards like Pierre Van Hooijdonk.

But apart from Seedorf, the scapegoat of national coaches before, Advocaat has stuck by his players – who, according to the media, have no confidence in him – and avoided making harsh but necessary decisions. He has continued to use the forward partnership of Kluivert and Ruud Van Nistelrooy despite its failure to make an impact. In competitive games, the coach has never sacrificed one of the duo for Roy Makaay or Van Hooijdonk.

After the 'Czechmate', the coach said he needed time to think. He certainly does.

Holland's top clubs are also showing inconsistency. After a dismal home defeat by Monaco in their first Champions League group game, PSV Eindhoven took revenge at Feyenoord in the Dutch championship, winning 3-1. However, they then lost 1-0 at home to AZ. This allowed Ajax, who had suffered a humiliating 4-2 defeat at NAC Breda, to retake top spot by thrashing Willem II 6-0 at home next time out.

Feyenoord, sixth after six rounds and five points behind Ajax, are suffering from the loss of Van Hooijdonk, Paul Bosvelt, Brett Emerton and Bonaventure Kalou over the summer; the job of coach Bert Van Marwijk is now under threat. However, the first managerial casualty was Peter Boeve, fired by bottom club Zwolle after taking one point from the first five games.

Cristian Chivu's £11million, on-off transfer to Roma has finally been resolved. The Ajax and Romania defender moved in the summer only to be recalled after the Italians failed to deliver a bank guarantee. Chivu then went back to Roma on loan for four months but is now there permanently after the money was transferred.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

Guilty...Davids was sent off for the eighth time early in the Prague defeat

AUSTRIA

Admira scoop Jugovic

Twice European Cup winner Vladimir Jugovic made an instant impact after sensationally joining modest Admira Wacker on a free transfer from French title-chasers Monaco.

The former Yugoslavia midfielder scored in only his second game, a 1-1 draw at home to title co-favourites Grazer AK, and his classy displays helped Admira climb to sixth place in Austria's 10-team top division.

Jugovic, who won Europe's top club competition with Red Star Belgrade in 1991 and Juventus five years later, is married to an Austrian and began his search for a club in the vicinity of Vienna after the couple decided to move to the city. He was persuaded to join Admira because of his friendship with the club's leading player Dejan Markovic, a former Yugoslavia team-mate.

"I have not come here to lose my reputation. I want to play in the UEFA Cup one more time," said Jugovic, who also previously played for Sampdoria, Lazio and Internazionale.

Harry Miltner

PORTUGAL

Porto back on top

Defending champions FC Porto went top on goal difference from surprise early leaders Maritimo after beating arch-rivals Benfica 2-0 at home in the fifth round of matches.

Maritimo, who had started with four 1-0 wins, dropped their first points of the season two days before the Porto-Benfica clash after being held to a 1-1 draw at home by Sporting Braga.

Porto went three points clear on the following weekend, beating Guimaraes 2-1 away as Maritimo suffered their first defeat, 1-0 at Estrela Amadora.

Alberto da Silva

Tug of war...Club Brugge and Ajax

BELGIUM

Big Two still small fry in Europe

THE BEST OF Belgium is falling well short when it comes to European competition. Champions Club Brugge and last season's runners-up Anderlecht have set their usual relentless pace in the domestic League but had only a point apiece after two rounds of the Champions League.

Both clubs had legitimate reasons to feel hard done by in Europe. Brugge had Peruvian striker Andres Mendoza sent off on the stroke of half-time against Celta Vigo after a disgraceful show of histrionics by the Spanish side. The dismissal seriously limited Brugge's scoring potential, and with another striker – Sandy Martens – sent off late on, with far fewer complaints, it was hardly a surprise they were held to a goalless draw.

The following night Anderlecht conceded a thoroughly dubious penalty, dispatched by Lyon's Juninho Pernambucano for the only goal. Television replays confirmed that Anderlecht keeper Daniel Zitka had touched the ball rather than Lyon forward Giovane Elber, whose fall in the box was typically theatrical.

But Anderlecht had only themselves to blame for not defeating Bayern Munich in their second game. The German champions snatched a draw having gone behind following the first-half dismissal of Claudio Pizarro. The next night Brugge were undone by Belgium striker Wesley Sonck, who scored both goals in Ajax's 2-0 win.

Domestically, there was no stopping Anderlecht, who won their first seven League games. However, they did allow newly-promoted Heusden-Zolder their first goals of the campaign during a 4-2 victory.

Brugge blamed defender Peter Van der Heyden for leaving the gaps that were exploited by St Truiden, whose 3-2 win cost the champions their unbeaten record.

Standard Liege were the most active side on the transfer front before the window closed, welcoming back striker Emile Mpenza from Schalke and signing central defender Gonzalo Sorondo (Internazionale) and midfielder Miljenko Mumlek from Varteks of Croatia.

Nicholas Harling

REP OF IRELAND

Shelbourne checked

Shelbourne's lead at the top of the table was cut to five points when they lost 1-0 to second-placed Bohemians.

Drogheda United have appointed Paul Doolin as their new manager. He replaces Harry McCue, who was sacked for failing to take Drogheda clear of the relegation zone. Former Bohemians boss Pete Mahon has taken over at UCD.

Dermot Keely has quit Derry City after two months in charge during which the team failed to win a single game. He has been replaced by assistant Gavin Dykes.

Gary Kelly has announced his international retirement. The 29-year-old Leeds full-back, who won 52 caps, has not figured since Brian Kerr took over as national coach last January.

Sean Creedon

LIECHTENSTEIN

Stocklasa injury blow

Vaduz, struggling in the Swiss Challenge League (Second Division), were dealt another blow when midfielder Martin Stocklasa was ruled out for four weeks with a dislocated elbow.

Jochem Abel enjoyed a successful start as coach of Triesenberg, leading them to victory in the derby against Triesen.

Graeme Crawford

In dispute...Grasshopper's Richard Nunez

Grasshopper in freefall

SWITZERLAND

CHAMPIONS GRASSHOPPER SLID closer to the relegation zone after losing their fourth game in a row, 3-2 at home to Aarau, in late September. The result, their seventh defeat in 11 games, left them eighth in the 10-team Super League just two points above the relegation play-off berth occupied by city rivals Zurich.

The cash-strapped club are beset by internal strife, most notably coach Marcel Koller's mishandling of Richard Nunez. After publicly stating that last season's League top scorer did very little defensive work, Koller dropped the Uruguayan midfielder for the Swiss Cup first round tie against Liga 1 side Juventus Young Fellows. Grasshopper struggled to a 2-1 win, watched by Nunez from the stands after he refused to take his place on the substitutes' bench.

Club president Thomas Gulich then stepped in, attempting to end the stand-off by securing an apology from Nunez. However, the Uruguayan responded by saying that as the club were badly in need of money his agent would intensify efforts to secure him a move during the winter transfer window.

Grasshopper's fortunes could not be in starker contrast to those of Basle, who they dethroned as champions last season. Basle's 2-0 home win over Young Boys was their 11th in a row, equalling Servette's record campaign-opening winning sequence set in 1981-82. Swiss Under-21 striker Marco Streller, watched by scouts from Liverpool, hit both goals before being forced off with concussion in the 35th minute.

Ivar von Rulach

NORWAY

Rosenborg's round dozen

ROSENBORG CLINCHED THEIR 12th consecutive League title with four games to play after beating closest rivals Bodo/Glimt at home by a remarkable 5-4.

Rosenborg appeared to be strolling to victory after going 4-0 up early in the second half, but the visitors staged an amazing fightback to level, only for midfielder Roar Strand to make all their effort in vain by scoring the winner.

"This is the best team I have coached," said Aage Hareide, who succeeded Nils Arne Eggen at the end of last season. "But I'm looking for even more improvement."

John Carew may have called time on his international career after saying he would be unavailable for Norway's last Euro 2004 tie, at home to Luxembourg. His decision came in the wake of a brawl with team-mate John Arne Riise on the bus back from the training ground before the 1-0 friendly defeat by Portugal in Oslo in September.

Riise had clearly provoked Carew during training and according to eye witnesses on the bus, the forward lunged at the Liverpool man. As a consequence the FA ordered Carew to leave the camp. Although the two players settled their differences, Carew still said he now wanted to focus on his career with new club Roma.

Sigurd Odegaard

Easy, boys...Steffen Iversen steps in to separate John Carew and John Arne Riise after the dust-up in training

SWEDEN

Tommy keeps his record

See you in Portugal...Mellberg (right) and his team-mates salute the Swedish fans

SWEDEN'S UNEXPECTEDLY EASY 2-0 win in Poland in September not only secured them a berth in the Euro 2004 finals but it also extended Tommy Soderberg's remarkable record. The national coach, in charge since 1998, has not lost in 25 European Championship and World Cup qualifying games during his reign.

Sweden showed outstanding resilience, remaining in control of the group despite having to do without trusted stars such as skipper Patrik Andersson and striker Henrik Larsson, both retired from the national team.

"For a small country, our achievement is amazing," said new captain Olof Mellberg. "There is a tremendous buzz among the squad right now. We play smart football based on proven, watertight tactics."

Sweden have a fairly new look, even though the style remains the same. Mellberg's centre-back partnership with Michael Svensson has quickly become one of the most intimidating in Europe. Left-back Erik Edman has won praise, while the energetic Mikael Nilsson has become a fixture in midfield.

However, it is not all sweetness and light. Wayward Ajax forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic caused uproar when he 'stole' a penalty from Kim Kallstrom, whom the coaches had ordered to take the kick, during the 5-0 Euro 2004 qualifying win over San Marino. Although Ibrahimovic later apologised, the incident raised fresh doubts about his maturity.

Kallstrom has since been in trouble himself, sent off during Djurgardens' 3-2 defeat of Hammarby in a classic Stockholm derby. Karl-Oskar Fjortoft, Halmstads' playmaker, was also dismissed.

Pentti Hietanen

DENMARK

'92 defenders lead promotion charge

Denmark's two centre-backs in their remarkable 1992 European Championship triumph are now deadly managerial rivals for promotion from the First Division. Kent Nielsen has had a flying start to the season in charge of Horsens, with nine wins and a draw from the opening 10 games. But hot on his heels is Lars Olsen, at second-placed Randers, five points behind.

Nielsen always looked management material, a shrewd figure with a sound perspective of the game, yet even he is astounded by the progress Horsens have made. Their only slight stumble was a 1-1 draw away to pre-season promotion favourites Silkeborg.

Unlike Silkeborg, who are a full-time professional club, many of the Horsens players are part-timers, and Nielsen's task is to keep them consistent throughout an arduous campaign. "We know we can't match the big city clubs like FC Copenhagen," he says. "But our youth policy is very strong and we are entitled to our ambition."

Esbjerg have continued to make the running in the Superliga, lying a point clear of Brondby after 10 rounds.

Jim Holden

Fresh start...Ravanelli

SCOTLAND

Ravanelli rolls in at Dundee

A FEW SEASONS ago, Dundee proved that the acquisition of glamorous overseas stars was not, within the context of Scottish football, the sole preserve of Celtic and Rangers by luring one-time Argentina World Cup hero Claudio Caniggia to Dens Park. Now chairman Giovanni Di Stefano has pulled off another potential coup by acquiring former Juventus and Middlesbrough striker Fabrizio Ravanelli.

The 'White Feather' has not kicked a ball in anger for months but says he is determined to regain full fitness and contribute to what appears to be an upturn in the Tayside club's fortunes. Ravanelli is joined at Dundee by Craig Burley (ex-Celtic and Derby), also keen to kick-start his career after an extended spell on the sidelines.

Celtic manager Martin O'Neill calmed fans' anxieties about his potential departure by saying he was not interested in the managerial vacancy at Tottenham following Glenn Hoddle's dismissal. Any suggestion that the offer of a financially-rewarding contract from Spurs would tempt O'Neill was undermined by the revelation that he actually took a cut in his basic pay when he moved to Celtic Park from Leicester.

Alex McLeish also ruled out a move by signing a new four-year contract with Rangers. The manager has overseen an impressive start to the season, with the club's fine European form being matched by some excellent League performances. Recent recruit Paolo Vanoli, from Bologna, made an early impact with a stunning 30-yard strike in a 3-1 home win over Dundee at the end of September.

Alan Fairley

FINLAND

Armstrong rewarded

Keith Armstrong has been fittingly rewarded for HJK Helsinki's fine recent form by being given a new two-year contract. The Englishman clinched the deal after his side won four out of five games to move within a point of League leaders FC Haka.

"I am happy to have the chance to continue my work here," said Armstrong, 45, who led the club to the title last year having won three championships in a row with Haka between 1998 and 2000.

However, opinion in Finland is still divided over his merits, despite his superb track record. Even HJK fans have blamed Armstrong for the side's perceived dull, safety-first football.

Several of Finland's other top clubs have also shown their desire to hang on to their coaches, with Olli Huttunen (Haka), Ari Hjelm (Tampere) and Ari Tiittanen (Allianssi) all signing new deals.

However, Juha Malinen is leaving MyPa at the end of the season, handing over to assistant Ilkka Makela, who made a record 441 League appearances for the club.

Struggling Kotka have sacked their English coach, Steven Polack.

Pentti Hietanen

ICELAND

Ups go down

Promoted Valur and Throttur lasted only one season in the top flight. They were consigned to the drop after a tense final day on which any of the bottom five sides could have gone down.

Valur, 6-2 losers at Fylkir, were relegated for the third time in five seasons, but the drop tasted more bitter to Throttur, whose blend of enterprise and entertainment won them plenty of new support during a campaign in which they slid spectacularly out of the top four in the last few games.

Throttur went down after a 1-0 defeat at Fram, who remarkably defied the drop on the last day for the fifth year running.

IA Akranes rounded off what, by their standards, was a quiet season by beating FH 1-0 in the Cup Final, lifting the trophy for the ninth time in 18 years.

FH, still to claim a major trophy, ended the League season on a high by thrashing champions KR 7-0, the west Reykjavik side's worst defeat since 1922.

Rab Christie

WALES

Barry: semi-pro and bottom

The League table has a very unusual look, with champions Barry Town rooted to the bottom as they struggle to recover from their financial problems. Under administration and with last season's title-winning squad all departed, the club had picked up just one point from six games by the end of September.

New team co-bosses David Hughes and Jason Murphy have pulled together a semi-professional side, who have yet to prove themselves. Their sole point came at fellow strugglers Carmarthen Town, who have sacked manager Tomi Morgan. Ex-Barry defender Andrew York has taken over as caretaker.

Barry's fall leaves Total Network Solutions as the only fully professional side in the League, and they topped the table with a 100 per cent record after six games. Aberystwyth Town, Bangor City and Rhyl are the three other sides most likely to mount a strong challenge.

A new rule regarding substitutes has been adopted, with clubs now allowed to name two from among their youth academy players to allow them first-team squad experience.

Mel Thomas

NORTHERN IRELAND

Favourites fumble

Championship favourites Linfield and Glentoran stumbled as the new Premiership season got under way in mid-September, the former losing 2-0 at Coleraine, the latter being held to a goalless draw at home by Crusaders.

Linfield's defeat put the heat on coach David Jeffrey following the previous trophyless campaign. Glentoran were kept at bay by a great display from Crusaders keeper Michael Dougherty, who last season was playing for third-level side Harland and Wolff Welders.

Coleraine keeper Davy O'Hare made an impact in his club's second game, securing a 1-1 draw at Lisburn Distillery with a huge goalmouth clearance that beat counterpart Philip Matthews.

Roy Kitson

TURKEY

Besiktas back on song

Ground force...Sergen Yalcin scores his second goal in Besiktas' 2-0 Champions League win at Chelsea

BESIKTAS MAY HAVE made a tentative start to both domestic and European seasons but they stormed right back to form during a marvellous few days at the turn of the month.

A few days after the Turkish champions had annihilated Black Sea title contenders Trabzonspor 5-0 at home, they recorded a stunning 2-0 win over star-studded Chelsea at Stamford Bridge in their second Champions League tie.

The latter, their first away victory in European competition – and only Chelsea's second European defeat at home – put them joint second in Group G, a point behind Lazio. After seven rounds of the domestic League, Besiktas were three points clear of second-placed Fenerbahce and had the only unbeaten record.

Only a short time before their wonder week, the Istanbul side were desperately seeking a morale boost. They suffered a dispiriting 2-0 defeat at home to Lazio in their opening Champions League encounter, prompting coach Mircea Lucescu to make the far-from-encouraging statement that great success in Europe was just a dream for the Black Eagles.

Besiktas were less than convincing in many of their domestic matches, too, even though they won the opening five. The fans' worries mounted when their 100 per cent record ended with a 1-1 draw at Istanbulspor. Why were the title-holders so hesitant? Why was Lucescu keeping his strong signings – including Ahmed Hassan, Okan Koc, Sinan Kaloglu and Emre Asik – on the bench, while players such as forward Ahmet Dursun continued to start games and misfire? And what was going on with Ilhan Mansiz, for whom Lucescu had refused to make a back-up signing despite the Turkey striker's ongoing injury problems?

Yet suddenly it all began to gel. Lucescu's side were working together – old guard and new boys alike. They showed speed and fluidity, and added opportunist finishing to their solid defensive armour. Ilhan began to show some of his old form and was scoring at last after a prolonged goal drought – although his red card against Chelsea for twice kicking the ball away after the whistle had gone will have done nothing for the wilful player's popularity.

Playmaker Sergen Yalcin delivered the goods against Chelsea, scoring twice within five first-half minutes during a classy display. But even after his bravado performance, he said the credit was all Lucescu's. "We tried to do what the boss said and we succeeded," he said.

If that is the case, they had better keep listening.

Suna Erdem

CROATIA

Big Two at daggers drawn

THE RIVALRY between the country's two biggest clubs, Dinamo Zagreb and Hajduk Split, reached new heights as they locked horns at the top of the table.

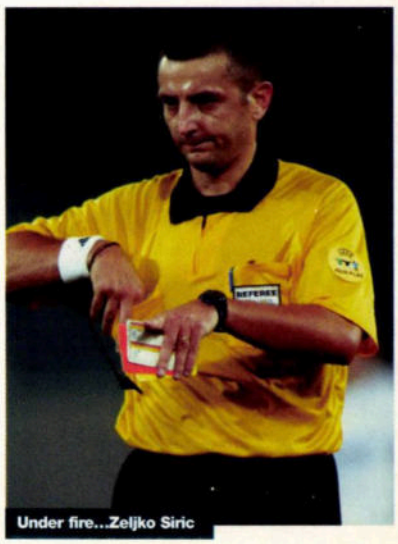
After nine rounds both teams had 21 points, nine clear of the pack, and even at this early stage there have been accusations of foul play. Dinamo, the defending champions, made the first dig, accusing leading referee Zeljko Siric of favouring Hajduk and demanding that he should not be allowed to officiate any games involving the top two.

In turn, Hajduk fans accused the Zagreb establishment of snubbing the city of Split following the controversial switch of the October Euro 2004 qualifier against Bulgaria from their hometown to the capital.

They protested in a mass walkout after 75 minutes of Hajduk's home game against Marsonia, leaving behind banners reading: "Split is Croatian also!"

Four coaches have already lost their jobs: Rijeka's Vjekoslav Lokica (replaced by Ivan Katalinic), Miodrag Stilinovic at Marsonia (Davor Mladina), Zlatko Kranjcar at Zagreb (Damir Petravic) and Drazen Besek at Varteks (Branko Janzek).

Zdravko Reic



Under fire...Zeljko Siric

New hope for national team

SLOVENIA

Blazevic bombs at Mura

The sensational appointment of Miroslav Blazevic to lead top division side Mura in the summer prompted speculation that the previously unheralded club could actually mount a championship challenge this season. But the reign of the legendary former Croatian national team coach ended in humiliation after just two months as Mura were knocked out of the Slovenian Cup by Third Division Nafta.

Blazevic arrived with much fanfare having just led Dinamo Zagreb to the Croatian title and claimed he could do the equivalent with Mura despite the squad's limited ability. He left blaming his failure on those very players. "I was wrong," said the coach. "I thought those players had character, but they are not lions, they are rabbits."

Olimpija Ljubljana also suffered a humiliating Cup exit, losing to top division whipping boys and poor relations FC Ljubljana, whose team features many 'rejects' from Olimpija.

Zdravko Reic

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Osim quits despite fans' demo

Popular Zeljeznicar coach Amar Osim caused consternation when he resigned after the club's poor start to the season. Supporters organised demonstrations against the decision and demanded the resignation of the entire Zeljeznicar board, but all to no avail.

Osim, who led the club to two League titles and two national cups, made his decision following four consecutive defeats – three in the championship and the fourth in the first leg of their UEFA Cup first round tie against Scottish club Hearts. The new man in charge is Milomir Odovic.

City rivals Sarajevo have also changed coaches following their shock Cup exit at the hands of Third Division Drinovci. Husref Musemic was replaced by assistant Agim Nikolic after the defeat. Drinovci are based in a village with only 300 houses and have so few players that they often struggle to put out a team.

Zdravko Reic

Kick off...but Delibasic's red card at Marseille proved costly for Partizan Belgrade

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

THE NATIONAL TEAM'S 1-1 draw with Italy in Belgrade, coupled with their 1-0 home win over Wales three weeks earlier, were not enough to earn them a Euro 2004 play-off place.

But the results and the strong performances at least represented a kind of rehabilitation for the team's disastrous year until then. The recent form offers brighter prospects for the 2006 World Cup qualifiers.

Champions League debutants Partizan Belgrade put in a solid performance in their first group game, securing a 1-1 draw at home to FC Porto.

However, though they started their second game, away to Marseille, confidently and were in control early on, it all went downhill after striker Andrija Delibasic was sent off on the stroke of half-time for a second bookable offence. Partizan eventually lost 3-0.

Vladimir Novak

MALTA

Heese fills the gap

German Horst Heese has been put in charge of the national team on a temporary basis until a long-term replacement for compatriot Siegfried Held is found. Held stepped down after Malta's final Euro 2004 qualifier, a 2-2 draw with Israel in the Turkish city of Antalya. Ironically, this was the team's only point gained in the qualifying tournament, following seven defeats.

Heese, who is also the Maltese FA's technical director, was previously in charge of the national side between February 1988 and May 1991. The German will be assisted by Under-21 coach Mark Miller.

Newcomers Msida St Joseph have been the surprise package during the early part of the season, rising to second place after a 4-1 win over champions Sliema Wanderers and 2-0 victories against Hamrun and Pieta Hotspurs. In between, however, they received a 7-1 thrashing at the hands of leaders Birkirkara.

The latter have lost the services of Malta midfielder Luke Dimech, who has joined English Third Division side Mansfield Town on a one-year contract.

Domenico Aquilina

MACEDONIA

Dragan to retake the reins

Dragan Kanatlarovski is to sign a two-year contract to lead the national team, having already taken temporary charge following the dismissal of Nikola Ilievski. Kanatlarovski was previously in charge for 18 months between 1999 and 2001.

The FA has been fined £12,000 after Macedonian fans shouted racist abuse and burned the English flag during the 2-1 home Euro 2004 qualifying defeat by Sven Goran Eriksson's side in September.

Dragan Hristovski has resigned as coach of Tikves and been replaced by Naum Ljamcevski.

Michel Stojmanovski

GREECE

AEK face the rap

FIFA has threatened to punish AEK Athens if they do not pay £115,000 owed to their former Brazilian player Rodrigo Ferrugem. The cash-strapped club also reportedly owe money to several of their current squad.

In September, meanwhile, AEK paid the first of 10 instalments of £11,500 to another former player, Mauricio Wright.

UEFA is investigating allegations that Greek officials attempted to bribe Armenia to throw the crucial Euro 2004 qualifier in September. Greece won 1-0 in Yerevan to stay top of Group 6. The federation has denied the accusations, calling them "shameless lies and a product of fantasy".

Lou Economopoulos

Hajto in hot water

POLAND

NATIONAL TEAM CAPTAIN Tomasz Hajto endured a barrage of media criticism after being sent off during Poland's comprehensive Euro 2004 defeat by Sweden in September. The result left the country's qualification chances hanging by a thread.

"Get out! We don't need you any more," the *Sport* newspaper ordered the Schalke defender. "And thank you for your conceit and cynicism." Hajto was dismissed in the 63rd minute of the 2-0 defeat in Chorzow after elbowing an opponent. Before the game he had caused uproar by accusing leading Polish striker Emmanuel Olisadebe of faking injuries around the time of international matches because he was no longer committed to Poland's cause.

Ironically, Olisadebe, who hotly denied the accusation, then announced he would be out of action until the end of the year following knee surgery. He was thus set to miss Poland's final qualifier, away to Hungary, a game they had to win to have any chance of reaching the play-offs, while hoping group winners Sweden would beat Latvia.

Amica Wronki led the League with 18 points after seven games, fired by the goals of Pawel Kryszalowicz. The striker has quickly proved himself to be the best player in the domestic championship having rejoined Amica during the summer from Eintracht Frankfurt.

Defending champions Wisla Krakow, lying third, three points behind Amica, have handed coach Henryk Kasperczak a new five-year contract. The deal ended speculation that he was about to be sacked following Wisla's crushing 4-1 aggregate defeat by Anderlecht in the Champions League third qualifying round.

Katowice fans physically assaulted their own players after the team lost 4-1 away to newly-promoted Gornik Leczna, accusing them of 'selling' the match. Gornik are a far happier ship, lying second in the table just two points behind Amica after seven rounds.

Dariusz Kurowski

Elbow and out...Hajto was sent off against Sweden

CZECH REPUBLIC

Pressure mounts on Big Two bosses

The disappointing League form of traditional powerhouses Sparta Prague and Slavia Prague has left both clubs' coaches fighting to keep their jobs.

Sparta slipped to seventh place after losing 2-0 away to Liberec in mid-September. And although they responded with easy wins over Synot and Chmel Blsany, and club president Vlastimil Kostal has given coach Jiri Kotrba his backing, the team's form is still far below expectations.

The situation at Slavia is equally tense. Failure to qualify for the Champions League has cost them dearly financially, while on the pitch, a run of five League games without a win, culminating in a dismal 1-0 defeat away to struggling Pribram, prompted widespread criticism of coach Miroslav Beranek.

The team bounced back by thumping previously unbeaten Brno 4-1 but were still nine points behind League leaders Banik Ostrava.

Sparta and Slavia can look to Prague's other First Division team, Viktoria Zizkov, for a lesson on the perils of changing coaches mid-season. Viktoria took just one point from three League games after replacing Vitezslav Lavicka with Vaclav Hradecky, slipping into the bottom two.

In stark contrast to the Prague teams' travails, unbeaten Ostrava continue to thrive. Leading scorer Marek Heinz took his League tally to eight goals in nine games, scoring twice in his side's 3-0 win over Synot.

Sam Beckwith

SLOVAKIA

Puchov shock Barça

Puchov pulled off a massive shock by holding Barcelona to a 1-1 draw at home in the first leg of their UEFA Cup first round tie.

The Slovak Cup holders, who a year ago lost 10-1 on aggregate to Bordeaux in the same competition, were widely expected to be handed a similar thrashing by the Catalan side. But the team turned in a determined and intelligent display that caused a ragged and uncreative Barcelona problems for much of the game. Puchov striker Mario Breska was outstanding, fittingly providing the final pass for Milan Jambor's equaliser in injury time.

Slovakia's two biggest clubs, Zilina and Slovan Bratislava, both sacked their coaches after a run of poor form. Champions Zilina, bottom of the League after 10 rounds, replaced Milan Lesicky with Juraj Simurka from Czech Second Division side SC Xaverov. Third-from-bottom Slovan, just a point ahead of Zilina, promoted assistant Libor Fasiang in place of Jozef Valovic.

Ed Holt

BULGARIA

Todorov bows out unbeaten

Georgi Todorov has quit as coach of Levski Sofia despite the side being unbeaten in the League and still in the UEFA Cup. His decision came after his side were held to a goalless draw at home by lowly Cherno More. The result left Levski fourth in the table, four points behind leaders Lokomotiv Plovdiv.

Former Bulgaria captain Georgi Dimitrov has taken the reins at struggling Marek for the fourth time. He replaces Lubomir Traikov, who resigned after a 3-0 defeat at home to defending champions CSKA Sofia.

In other coaching changes, Stefan Grozdanov has taken charge of Spartak Varna for a second time following the resignation of Miroslav Mironov, who has since joined bottom side Belasitsa. He replaces the sacked Mladen Katic.

Michael Bowesfield

ESTONIA

Flora boosted by Reim's return

National team captain Martin Reim made an impressive return from long-term injury, scoring for Flora Tallinn against Valga in his second game back to help keep the club on course for a third straight title. Reim was sidelined for more than three months with a leg injury and also had back surgery in July.

After 23 rounds, Flora were still unbeaten, and had not lost a League game since September 2002.

Andres Must

Romantsev crash-lands on Saturn

Nightmare start...new Saturn coach Oleg Romantsev

RUSSIA

FORMER MOSCOW SPARTAK and Russia coach Oleg Romantsev made a disastrous start at his new club, Saturn, who were beaten 3-0 at home by bottom side Torpedo-Metallurg in his first game in charge.

Romantsev, 49, replaced Vitali Shevchenko, who was fired by Saturn's owners with just five League games left to play. The ambitious club, based in the town of Ramenskoye near Moscow, were supposed to put in a challenge to long-time League leaders CSKA but have failed to live up to expectations. Despite substantial investment from local sponsors, Saturn lay only sixth after 26 rounds, 12 points behind the Army club.

Italian Nevio Scala is the favourite to take the reins at Spartak, whose most recent manager, Andrei Chernyshev, resigned after a run of unimpressive results.

With the Russian coaches' roulette gaining speed, only Yuri Syomin of Lokomotiv Moscow and Kurban Berdyev of Rubin Kazan seem sure to be at the helm of their clubs at the start of next season. Lokomotiv, last year's champions, had a poor start to this campaign, but had climbed to third place with four rounds left. Newly-promoted Rubin have been the League's biggest sensation, riding high in joint fourth place on the back of formidable home form.

Victor Gusev

ROMANIA

Iordanescu handed new deal

Anghel Iordanescu has been handed a new contract as national coach despite the team facing Euro 2004 elimination. The new deal takes Iordanescu up until the end of the 2006 World Cup qualifiers, with an option to extend it if Romania reach the finals. His old contract ran out in September, when a late Denmark equaliser denied the side a guaranteed minimum play-off place for next year's European Championship finals. The draw left Romania reliant on Luxembourg getting at least a point away to Norway, and Denmark taking at least a point away to Bosnia-Herzegovina to ensure a play-off berth.

National Bucharest have reappointed Cosmin Olaroiu as coach to replace Walter Zenga, who is now the club's technical director. The former Italy keeper was moved upstairs after the team took only three points from their first four games of the season. Olaroiu took National to second place in the 2001-02 championship before Zenga was brought in.

Sorin Cartu has resigned at Universitatea Craiova after a 1-0 home defeat by Dinamo Bucharest left the side just two points off the bottom.

Michael Bowesfield

HUNGARY

Ferencvaros back in the frame

Ferencvaros were the only unbeaten side after eight League rounds and clawing their way back up the table having had six points deducted as punishment for crowd trouble at a home game at the end of last season. Recent results included a 3-0 win over Pecs, which was all the more impressive since it was achieved without injured first-choice strikers Zoltan Gera and Attila Tokoli.

The latter hardly endeared himself to Ferencvaros supporters when he made a swift return to the team fold having announced his retirement from the game after the violent end-of-season clash with Debrecen which led to their points deduction.

After a bright start, champions MTK have grown inconsistent and led only on goal difference from surprise package Balaton. Meanwhile, 2002 champions Zalaegerszeg lost all their first eight games.

Peterjon Cresswell

Blokhin replaces Buriak

Oozing confidence...Oleg Blokhin

UKRAINE

OLEG BLOKHIN, the best player in the history of Soviet football, has been named as Ukraine's national coach after the federation decided not to renew the contract of Leonid Buriak. The former Kyiv Dynamo great replaced his best friend and former team-mate after Ukraine failed to gain even a play-off berth for the Euro 2004 finals.

Blokhin has signed a two-year contract, taking him up to the end of the 2006 World Cup qualifying campaign, with an option to extend it if Ukraine reach the finals. The Ukraine-born 51-year-old, who previously coached Greek sides Olympiakos, PAOK Salonika, Iraklis and AEK Athens, immediately stated his confidence that he could steer his country to top place in their World Cup qualifying group.

"I understand what kind of responsibility is on my shoulders, but I have always been an optimist," said Blokhin.

The new man was set to go into his first game – a friendly against Macedonia – without Andrii Husin, the team's most experienced player. The Dynamo midfielder will be sidelined for three months after undergoing surgery on a thigh injury.

Shakhtar Donetsk set a new League record by winning their first 10 matches of the season. Dynamo, five points behind, have signed former Real Madrid midfielder Perica Ognjenovic, while Vorskla Poltava recruited Serb defender Igor Dzinovic from Cukaricki Belgrade.

Oleg Zadernovsky

Brazil set early pace

...and Argentina disappoint as the World Cup qualifiers get under way

Jump to it...Ronaldinho heads Brazil's winner against Ecuador in Manaus

BRAZIL, THE FIRST World Cup holders forced to go through the qualifying stage for the next finals, went top of the South American pool after winning both their opening games.

The champions should have beaten Colombia by more than 2-1 in their opening game in Barranquilla, but the hosts proved difficult to break down. Ronaldo, scorer of the first goal, was outstanding in a game in which his Real Madrid team-mate Roberto Carlos won his 100th cap.

But having given the impression that they were seldom going full out against Colombia, Brazil then struggled to beat Ecuador 1-0 at home three days later. Their much-vaunted 'three Rs' attack – Ronaldinho, Ronaldo and Rivaldo – were frequently outshone by their Ecuadorean counterparts, Carlos and Otilino Tenorio. The visitors had long spells of possession and should have been given a second-half penalty. Ronaldinho was Brazil's saviour, scoring the only goal after 13 minutes.

Brazil's laboured performance was all the more surprising given Ecuador's far from ideal preparation for the match in the Amazonian city of Manaus. Five players were trapped in their hotel lift following a power cut, and the rest of the squad were forced to climb 11 floors with their luggage.

Ecuador's opening game, a 2-0 win over Venezuela in Quito, was easier than the score suggests, and in both matches they showed they are a well-organised team.

On paper, Argentina could not have had an easier start than facing Chile and Venezuela, the countries who had finished in the bottom two places in the 2002 qualifying tournament. But they were held to a 2-2 draw at home by Chile, and while beating Venezuela 3-0 away, were far from impressive.

Argentina's first goal against Chile – scored by Kily Gonzalez – was a gift from the goalkeeper, but Pablo Aimar added another before half-time. However, Chile were lifted when Milan Mirosevic pulled a goal back on the hour, Argentina did not react and Reinaldo Navia grabbed the equaliser with 13 minutes left.

The Argentinians built up a 3-0 lead by half-time against Venezuela but, for reasons best known to themselves and coach Marcelo Bielsa, subsequently shut up shop. After substitutions they ended up playing with only one striker – Hernan Crespo – against the continent's traditionally weakest team.

Argentina's failings in attack are still all too obvious, with the build-up too slow and a lack of invention. Yet there were positive signs during the opening qualifiers. Aimar and newcomer Andres D'Alessandro showed a good understanding, while Juan Sebastian Veron seemed to have recovered his excellent passing range against Chile, despite being whistled every time he touched the ball by the home fans, who blame him for Argentina's failure in last year's World Cup finals.

Then there was winger Cesar Delgado (profile, page 76), who has proved a real find. His precise crosses should have brought plenty of goals, but instead only highlighted the team's poor finishing.

Inconsistency reigned elsewhere. Uruguay trounced Bolivia 5-0 at home in the first match and lost 4-1 three days later in Paraguay, who had themselves gone down 4-1 to Peru in their opener.

Uruguay's new coach, Ramon Carrasco, backed up his promise to introduce a more attacking game by fielding three strikers plus attacking midfielder Alvaro Recoba against Bolivia, who could not contain them.

However, Carrasco made six changes for the Paraguay game – saying that his squad were all first-teamers – and was badly caught out. Jose Cardozo scored a hat-trick for the hosts, a feat also accomplished by Bolivia's Joaquin Botero as his team came back from their earlier thrashing to win 4-0 against pointless Colombia.

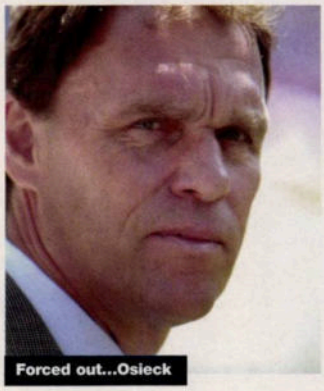
Nolberto Solano stood out for Peru, who had to withstand a lot of pressure before going on to beat Paraguay. The Newcastle midfielder scored their first-half equaliser and set up the second with a searching pass out of defence.

Juvenal Olmos, the new Chilean coach, may have had little experience but his team's deserved 2-1 home win over Peru, despite being without several injured players, including Marcelo Salas, put them joint second.

Eric Weil

CANADA

Player power helps oust Osieck


Forced out...Osieck

COMPLAINTS FROM disgruntled players about the harsh methods of national coach Holger Osieck helped prompt his departure after five years in charge.

The German left at the end of August following a meeting with newly-elected Canadian Soccer Association president Andy Sharpe, to whom players moaned about Osieck's unflinching, all-business mentality. Among the squad's gripes were that they had to endure formal team meals when travelling abroad and were given little free time during training camps.

But nobody could ever say Osieck didn't care. Ironically, his problem might have been that he cared too much. Nevertheless, as he sat alone at the team's hotel bar in Boston in July after an early elimination from the Gold Cup, eight players were knocking at Sharpe's door, saying they no longer recognised Osieck's leadership and wanted him out.

Sharpe was already under pressure from association officials angry at former CSA president Jim Fleming for extending the German's contract to the 2006 World Cup without their consent.

Osieck, who was also CSA technical director, presided over a record 15-game unbeaten run, which included the Gold Cup triumph of 2000. But things turned sour and they were brought down to earth by failure even to reach CONCACAF's final qualifying round for the 2002 World Cup.

That said, Osieck left with Canada in 79th place in the FIFA world rankings, up from the 101st all-time low position they occupied in December 1998 when he took over from Bob Lenarduzzi.

The CSA will now split the head coach and technical director roles. Candidates for the former include ex-Ipswich and Canada player Frank Yallop, now managing MLS side San Jose Earthquakes.

Philippe Germain

MEXICO

Opening wide open

THERE HAS BEEN little consistency in the opening championship to date, and with less than half the league stage to play no fewer than 15 of the 20 teams have a realistic chance of qualifying for the play-offs.

Tigres are one of the few sides to have shown any consistency. Coach Nery Pumpido is doing an excellent job, building a side that is strong in attack – Argentinians Andres Silvera and Walter Gaitan – and in defence – Claudio Suarez and Hugo Sanchez Jnr. Suarez, 34, is in surprisingly good form having been sidelined for months by an injury that prevented him appearing at last year's World Cup. The world's most-capped player is no doubt being spurred on by the thought that he has never won a Mexican League championship.

Another team to watch are Necaxa, now playing in their new Aguascalientes stadium in front of 20,000 sell-out crowds. Coach Raul Arias may have found a solution to their goal drought in Alfredo Moreno, whose spectacular effort from 56 metres consigned Guadalajara to a sixth defeat in eight games.

Toluca, last season's opening champions, are showing signs of age, while Monterrey have yet to show the spirit that took them to the closing title in June.

America, without a win until the sixth round, have also failed to impress. Under-pressure Dutch coach Leo Beenhakker appears unsure of his best line-up, having used 21 different players in the first 10 League matches, which brought only 13 points.

Carlos Ramirez

ROUND-UP

● Pablo Bengoechea has reversed his decision to walk out on URUGUAYAN side Penarol after pleas from fellow players and club officials. The 38-year-old midfielder, to whom fans have erected a statue, initially stormed out after coach Diego Aguirre dropped him, fearing he was getting past his best.

On the field, Penarol won their first five games in the closing championship before being held 2-2 by Bella Vista. Veteran goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert scored one of Penarol's goals, from the penalty spot, his first since joining the club just before the campaign got under way. The 38-year-old former Paraguay keeper says he will retire when his contract ends in December.

● Officials of Universitario, one of PERU'S leading clubs but now in danger of relegation and with heavy debts, are being probed for alleged fraud. Officials are accused of swindling the club out of £1.4 million.

● In ECUADOR, players of police club Espoli have been on strike because of non-payment of wages, forcing the club to field a junior amateur team at Cuenca. This involved a 10-hour bus journey because Espoli cannot afford air fares, and the youngsters lost 4-0. Until last year the club was partly financed by a sub of 60p from every policeman's salary. This is now a voluntary contribution, and the club are in financial difficulty. Meanwhile, the hotel where the Espoli players are lodged has threatened to throw them out for non-payment of bills.

● Former COLOMBIA striker Faustino Asprilla is back at his hometown club, Tulua, having struggled with fitness at Universidad de Chile. The 33-year-old made an instant impact, helping Tulua to move off the bottom of the closing championship table.

● The BOLIVIAN closing championship was suspended for a week after seven clubs refused to play because of a dispute over international compensation payments. The FA resolved the dispute by agreeing to pay each club £25,000 now and another £6,250 at the end of the season.

● Argentinian coach Osvaldo Piazza has been fired by defending PARAGUAYAN champions Libertad after a row with club president Horacio Cartes. The latter wanted a greater say in squad purchases and selection, which Piazza would not countenance.

Another Argentinian, Gerardo Martino, who led Libertad to the title last year, has taken the reins at Cerro Porteno. The country's other big club, Olimpia, led the closing championship by a point.

● Roberto Perfumo, the former ARGENTINA defender, is the new government sports secretary. He takes over from former powerboat champion Daniel Scioli, now the country's vice-president.

Eric Weil

Home again...Faustino Asprilla

Too tight to call

JAPAN

THE TRADITIONAL DOMINANCE of Kashima Antlers and Jubilo Iwata is under threat, with as many as seven teams still in strong contention for the Second Stage championship title as the tournament passed its halfway point. The seven were separated by just two points, with the lead changing hands on a weekly basis.

First Stage champions Yokohama F Marinos took the hot-seat after the eighth round of matches, their 1-0 win over Gamba Osaka taking them above Nagoya Grampus Eight, who were held to a remarkable 4-4 draw by Ossie Ardiles' Tokyo Verdy 1969.

Verdy are themselves among the leading pack, along with JEF United Ichihara, Urawa Reds, Kashima Antlers and dark horses Kashiwa Reysol.

Marinos, who had a slow start, are well placed to win back-to-back stages following the return of several key players from injury. Their 5-1 thrashing of Shimizu S-Pulse in September was one of the finest performances of the season, and fittingly it was Tatsuhiko Kubo who got the scoring under way. The former Sanfrecce Hiroshima striker has been looking especially dangerous, scoring some superb goals, and is pressing hard for a national team recall.

At the bottom of the table, Vegalta Sendai set a J.League record of 19 games without a win. The slump cost manager Hidehiko Shimizu his job, but his replacement, former JEF and Grampus Eight coach Zdenko Verdenik, had a miserable start with a humiliating 6-1 home defeat by Urawa Reds.

Mike Plastow & Yumiko Nagae

Cutting edge...Tatsuhiko Kubo's goals are keeping Marinos among the title front-runners

ASIA/OCEANIA ROUND-UP

ASIA

- Hungarian striker Krisztian Kenesei struck twice as Beijing Guoan defeated champions Dalian Shide 3-0 to lift the CHINESE FA Cup.
- HONG KONG international Cheung Yiu Lun died in a car crash in early October.
- MPPJ Selangor became the first club side to win the MALAYSIA CUP, traditionally contested by state selections. Argentinian Juan Manuel Arostegui's hat-trick gave MPPJ a 3-0 win over Sabah in the Final.
- Home United, coached by Englishman Steve Darby, have won SINGAPORE'S S-League.
- Kim Do-hoon hit a hat-trick as champions Songnam Ilhwa beat Anyang Cheetahs 5-1 to go 14 points clear in SOUTH KOREA's K-League.
- Mohun Bagan defeated East Bengal on penalties to win INDIA'S IFA Shield.
- Ivan Brankovic, who led IRAN to the Asian Games gold medal last year, has been reappointed head coach.
- Muktijoddha KC are champions of BANGLADESH after defeating Mohammedan SC 3-2 on penalties.
- Tashkent's Pakhtakor won the UZBEKISTAN Cup, beating FC Nasaf 3-1 in the Final.

Michael Church, Azam Mahmood & Vladimir Kalinkovich

Early win...Newcastle United (in blue) defeat Northern Spirit

OCEANIA

- Newcastle United, coached by former Norwich and Tottenham midfielder Ian Crook, were top on goal difference in AUSTRALIA after winning their first two games.

Insolvent Soccer Australia is to be wound up and replaced as the domestic game's administrator by a new entity, the Australian Soccer Association.

- Sobou claimed their third successive National Club Championship title in PAPUA NEW GUINEA when defeating 2000 champions Unitech 1-0 in the Final.
- SAMOAN champions Lepea completed their League campaign with a 100 per cent record after thrashing Togafu'afu'a 11-0.
- Goalkeeper Tyson Tekeu was the hero of Tupapa's Air New Zealand Cup win in the COOK ISLANDS. He made several superb saves in the 0-0 draw with Nikao in the Final, before saving two penalties in the shoot-out.

Paul Moon

Kuwait race into finals

Kuwait became the first nation to qualify for the newly expanded Asian Cup, joining holders Japan and hosts China in next July's finals.

A 2-1 win over Palestine secured Paulo Carpegiani's team their place with two Group B qualifying matches to play.

Jordan beat Iran 3-2 in Group D to claim their first win of the qualifiers. The Iranians still led on goal difference from Jordan and Lebanon, but the latter had a game in hand after their home clash with North Korea at the end of September was postponed due to the visitors' involvement in a road accident on the way to Pyongyang airport. There were no reports of any injuries.

South Korea are in control of Group E after three wins out of three, including a 16-0 thumping of Nepal. Humberto Coelho's side are three points ahead of Oman.

The top two in each group qualify for the 16-team finals.

Michael Church

Esperance ease through

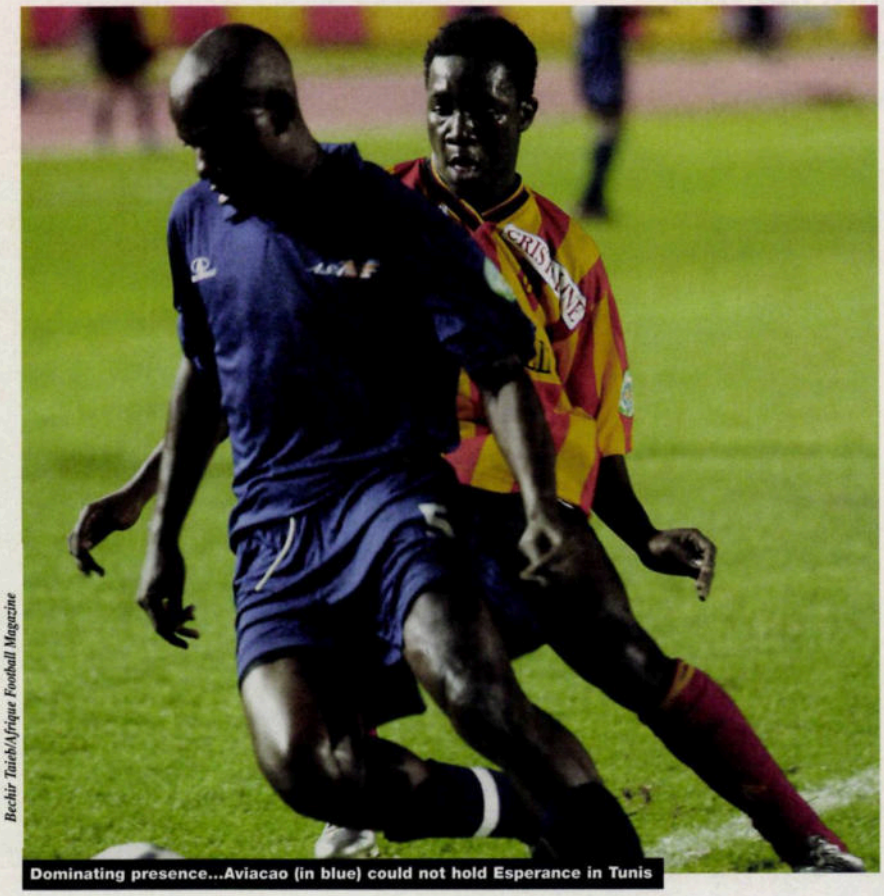
ESPERANCE OF TUNISIA were the first team to qualify for the semi-finals of this year's African Champions League, making sure of their place after just four of their six Group B matches. Skander Souayeh's early goal was enough to beat Angolan champions AS Aviacao in Tunis.

The Tunisians, who dropped only two points in their first five group encounters, were joined in the last four by USM Alger, who also profited against Aviacao. The Algerians launched a strong comeback after a poor start to the group stage, when they lost their first two games. A 2-0 home win over the Angolans, through goals from Abed Benchergui and Billel Dziri, ensured they grabbed runners-up spot behind Esperance on the back of home and away wins over Canon Yaounde of Cameroon.

Egyptian side Ismaili are certain qualifiers from Group A, with Enyimba of Nigeria likeliest to complete the semi-finals line-up. However, outsiders Simba still had a chance of making it through.

ASEC Abidjan of Ivory Coast were still winless going into their last group match, an abject performance by the tournament's joint top seeds.

Mark Gleeson



Bechir Taieb/Afrique Football Magazine

Dominating presence...Aviacao (in blue) could not hold Esperance in Tunis

Top draw for hosts Tunisia

Hosts Tunisia were handed the favourable draw they were looking for when the schedule for the 2004 African Nations Cup was determined in Tunis.

The home side face Rwanda, Guinea and the Democratic Republic of Congo in Group A, giving them a potentially easy ride to the knockout stages.

Even better for Tunisia was that several of the other top contenders were lumped together. Defending champions Cameroon will have to take on Algeria and Egypt in Group C, while Nigeria, Morocco and South Africa face each other in Group D. However, Senegal, top seeds in Group B, also appear to have a fairly easy passage to the last eight.

The draw gives the hosts' French coach Roger Lemerre an even better chance of completing a unique double, having led his homeland to triumph at Euro 2000.

The chaotic draw, in an overcrowded hall, inspired little confidence that the finals will be well organised. Tunisia, though, are promising they will have renovations to stadiums in Bizerte, Monastir and Sfax completed in time.

Mark Gleeson

AFRICA ROUND-UP

CENTRAL AFRICA

- Frenchman Jean-Paul Bernard, a former player with Lyon and Metz, is the new coach of CONGO.

EAST AFRICA

- Former Tanzania coach Mzee Kheri collapsed and died after a heart attack while berating one of his players, who had missed a penalty, during a match in ZANZIBAR.

NORTH AFRICA

- Etoile Sahel, of TUNISIA, have signed international midfielder Raouf Bouzaiene, who scored the country's only goal at last year's World Cup finals, from Italian club Genoa.

- MOROCCO overcame Gambia 5-3 on aggregate to reach the last 16 of the qualifiers for the 2004 Olympics.

- Frenchman Noel Tosi, 44, has taken charge of MAURITANIA.

- Hosts ALGERIA beat Burkina Faso on penalties to win a four-nation friendly tournament. Benin and Gabon were the other participants.

- Ilija Loncarevic, sports director of Croatian champions Dinamo Zagreb, has become LIBYA'S national coach.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Mandla Dlamini has quit as SWAZILAND coach after his side were defeated by Zimbabwe in the COSAFA Castle Cup semi-finals and then lost 3-0 at home to Botswana in a friendly.

- A shortage of banknotes in ZIMBABWE, related to the country's rampant inflation, led championship leaders Dynamos to allow fans to pay by cheque for tickets for their crunch game against arch-rivals Highlanders. "As a club with a big following we felt we had to do something to help those who wanted to come but did not have cash," said Dynamos chairman Ignatius Pamire.

WEST AFRICA

- Former Middlesbrough manager Bryan Robson has been appointed to lead NIGERIA into next year's African Nations Cup finals. The ex-England midfielder has been handed a six-month contract.

- Ralf Zumdick has taken over from German compatriot Burkhard Ziese as coach of GHANA.

- Former Marseille coach Henri Stambouli has replaced compatriot Christian Dalger at the helm in MALI.

Mark Gleeson

Use your loaf

Kingsmill is offering a chance to get free kit and equipment for your team in a deal that's the best thing since sliced bread

LES FERDINAND is backing Kingsmill's Free Kit for Clubs campaign. The Leicester and former England striker has been at the top of the game for more than 15 years but has not forgotten what it's like to play at grassroots level. He supports Kingsmill's scheme to provide free kit and equipment for football teams.

"All sports need help at grassroots level, and Kingsmill's scheme is great. It is nice to see a sponsor thinking about that area of the game," says Ferdinand.

The Kit for Clubs scheme covers 50 sports in all. Tokens from Kingsmill bread, rolls and bakery snacks can be exchanged for equipment and kit for adults' and children's teams.

"All teams want to have nice kit so they look and feel smart. It is important to feel good and to feel like a team," says Ferdinand. "When I was younger we never got much kit given to us. You weren't given it when you played for your club or school – you had to pay."

To register for the Kingsmill Kit for Clubs scheme, log on to www.kingsmillkitforclubs.com.

Over £10million-worth of free kit for sports clubs is up for grabs!

GRASSROOTS SPORT is seriously underfunded and in need of support, particularly when it comes to buying team kit and equipment. This is why Kingsmill is offering your team the chance to get kit and equipment absolutely free.

Team members, families and friends can collect tokens from Kingsmill bread, rolls and bakery snacks to claim free kit and equipment for some 50 different sports, including football, and what better way to do that than by enjoying Britain's most versatile and nutritional staple food. Tell your local team about the scheme, get them to register at www.kingsmillkitforclubs.com and start collecting the tokens. They are available on packs until August 2004 (while stocks last) and redeemable for kit until December 2004.

Bread provides a valuable source of complex carbohydrates, fibre and vitamins. Carbohydrates provide the main source of energy that we burn while being active, and if you eat too little you'll simply run out of the energy essential for a great performance.

Visit www.kingsmillkitforclubs.com

TALENT SCOUT

TOMORROW'S STARS TODAY

Eric ABIDAL

Lille defender in line for national team duty

NEARLY 25 YEARS have passed since Lille last had a player in the senior French national side – keeper Philippe Bergeroo back in 1979. Young central defender Eric Abidal could soon be the next.

While national coach Jacques Santini has many excellent candidates for his back four, the 24-year-old is rising fast and certainly would not look out of place in the France squad.

Abidal, easily the most impressive defender in Ligue 1 this season, has come through every test of late with flying colours. His pace, athleticism and power have proved more than a match for opponents of the undoubted calibre of Paris Saint-Germain's Pauleta, Fernando Morientes of Monaco and Lyon's Pegguy Luyindula.

Also able to play at right-back, Abidal has been compared to Juventus and France star Lilian Thuram, and no doubt onlooking scouts from Barcelona and Milan would readily agree.

But while the Lyon-born player is hot property now, it was not always the case. In two years at Monaco (2000-02) he was nothing more than a bit-part player and it came as no shock when the club declared he was surplus to requirements. The only serious offer was Lille's proposal to take him on loan for a season, but it turned out to be the perfect destination. Lille boss Claude Puel, who once briefly worked with him at Monaco, had no qualms about building his defence around 'Bibi', and the youngster responded with a most sure-footed 2002-03 campaign.

Then things began to get messy. Debt-ridden Monaco toyed with the idea of recalling Abidal, only to realise they could not do without the cash from his sale. Meanwhile, Paris Saint-Germain attempted to muscle in on negotiations. Lille, however, held all the aces. They had first option on him and paid £1.5million to take him on permanently this summer.

Under contract to the northern side until 2007, Abidal's immediate future seemed straightforward. But apparently not. Paris Saint-Germain president Francis Graille and coach Vahid Halilhodzic – who both used to work at Lille – continued to make overtures to sign him.

Showing rather less sound judgment than he normally does on the pitch, Abidal practised his wantaway speech: "My wish is to play for PSG and I'm ready to do anything for that to happen," he warned. "Paris would be a great opportunity for me and a great springboard to eventually play abroad."

Not that there was ever much chance of Lille granting his wish. Despite a £4m bid from PSG, Lille president Michel Seydoux was adamant that keeping Abidal was much more of a priority than turning a quick profit.

The defender will just have to be patient. His big move will come.

Nick Bidwell

Pick of the bunch...Abidal (left) has been the most impressive defender in the French League this season

FACT FILE

Club Lille
Country France
Born September 11, 1979, in Lyon
Previous clubs Lyon-Duchere, Monaco

Jose Antonio REYES

Andalucian artist now also creating an impression with Spain

ANDALUCIAN CAPITAL SEVILLA is the home of the most enduring Spanish cliches; of flamenco, bullfighting and passion, of a theatrical, flamboyant love of life. Its footballers are expected to 'ole' their way past defenders – in short, to be the exuberant, flashy Brazilians of the Spanish game.

So often the stereotype is utterly meaningless. Not so with Sevilla's 20-year-old winger-turned-striker Jose Antonio Reyes. Smiling broadly, he admits in an accent that is classic Sevilla: "I suppose I am a typically Andalucian footballer."

The forward is a fantasy footballer, brimming with pace, flair and enjoyment, an artist ever eager to take people on. As one local commentator claimed: "Reyes is one of the chosen ones – a pure expression of the Seville School."

Sports daily *Marca* describes Reyes as "quite simply, a superstar. Dribbling, magic, vision and goals wrapped in one. With Reyes, the spectacular is guaranteed."

Manager Joaquin Caparros, occasionally exasperated by Reyes' individualism, agrees, saying: "He thinks nothing of taking on four or five rivals."

No wonder Arsene Wenger was interested in bringing Reyes to Highbury, only for him to sign a new contract until 2010. At the time, the forward claimed he partly signed to shoo away potential suitors, allowing him to "relax". Now, though, he admits: "Arsenal are an excellent club, a team I love – and I wouldn't ever rule out joining them. At the moment, though, there's nothing in it."

Ironically, Sevilla are the League's toughest, most uncompromising team. "I'd agree that we are 'hard' in inverted commas," Reyes concedes. "And I suppose it is a bit odd that I'm one of the most fouled players, playing for one of the teams that commits most fouls."

Another reason to stay: Reyes is adored at the Sanchez Pizjuan stadium. In a city that boasts one of Spain's most passionate rivalries, Reyes is one of them. A member of the emblematic 'Biris' supporters club, whose shirt he wears under his own, he has a Sevilla mosaic built into his swimming pool, a Sevilla bedspread and Sevilla curtains. He might contemplate Arsenal, but he insists: "I would never join Betis, out of respect to my club, the fans and myself. I'm a *Sevillista* through and through."

Should anyone doubt the depth of the city's rivalry, Betis president Manuel Ruiz de Lopera recently prohibited his players from "fraternising with the enemy".

"Well, that's up to them," grins Reyes, having just been caught by *World Soccer* laughing and joking with the devil – well, Betis' own typical Andalucian, wonder winger and cheeky scamp Joaquin.

Reyes and Joaquin are chatting as Spain team-mates in Madrid. Reyes made an excellent senior team debut against Portugal last month. It was a "dream" – albeit one Reyes insists he "never" considered beyond his reach – but that same night Greece beat Armenia, virtually ensuring that Spain would need to go via the play-offs to reach Euro 2004.

Reyes winces at the prospect. "The truth is, it would be tough – very, very tough – to get England. I'd like us to avoid the big teams: England, Turkey, Holland. But if we do make it to Euro 2004, we can do something really great. I'm absolutely convinced of that."

Sid Lowe

DIOGO RINCON

Ukraine is home from home for Dynamo's Brazilian attacker

THE SCORER OF two fine goals against Lokomotiv Moscow in a recent Champions League tie, Kyiv Dynamo's 23-year-old Brazilian attacking midfielder or front-runner Diogo Rincon is finally on track to find a place in the football sun. In contrast to his team-mates in the Brazil side that won the 1997 World Youth Cup – Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Geovanni (Benfica) and Matuzalem (Brescia) – Diogo had to wait a little longer for his chance to show his skills in Europe. However, his chance came in June 2002, when Dynamo signed him on a four-year contract after noting his impressive form for Internacional of Porto Alegre.

"I made my decision to move to Ukraine in the knowledge that their League was not as influential in Europe as those in England, Italy, Spain, France or Germany," says Diogo. "But Dynamo are a very well known force in Europe. By signing a long-term deal with them, I've been given a good chance to develop."

"From the first moment I saw Diogo on video, it was obvious our scouts had not been wasting their time on the beaches," says Dynamo coach Olexiy Mikhailichenko, a former star midfielder at the club. "They discovered a very good player of great physical ability and pure Brazilian technique."

Equally comfortable as a striker or attacking midfielder, Diogo stresses that flexibility is the name of the game at Dynamo. "At the moment, my priority at Kyiv is in midfield. But the Dynamo philosophy is that I have to be ready to play anywhere in the attacking-third depending on the tactics of the coach."

And how well he has taken the theory on board, combining with Belarus international Valentin Bialkevich and veteran Andrii Husin to forge a strong midfield unit that has impressed in the Ukrainian League and in Europe.

"I think home is where the heart is," smiles Diogo. "Kyiv is the place for me."

Oleg Zadernovsky

FACT FILE

Club Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr)
Country Brazil
Born April 18, 1980, in Porto Alegre
Previous club Internacional
Honours World Youth Cup 1997; Ukrainian League 2003; Ukrainian Cup 2003

Mourad MEGHNI

'Little Zidane' reaping the rewards of early move to Italy

BOLOGNA'S FRENCH STARLET Mourad Meghni is not known as the 'Little Zidane' for nothing. Like the Real Madrid ace, the Paris-born 19-year-old has Algerian roots and is a playmaker of rare touch and vision.

Much to the dismay of the French federation, which shudders to see the country's best young players cherry-picked by foreign clubs at increasingly tender ages, Meghni has not played a single minute in his native First Division. He was spotted by then Bologna general manager Oreste Cinquini while playing for France's Under-15s in 2000, and despite being due to join Cannes, he swiftly back-tracked in order to sign for the Serie A club.

"Of course, going abroad when you are only 16 is not easy," says Meghni, a member of the France Under-17 side that claimed the world title in 2001. "There is a new language, a new lifestyle and a new footballing mentality to pick up. But it's been a fantastic experience for me in Italy."

After three highly-successful years with the Bologna youth side, which he often skippered, Meghni was finally given his first-team chance last spring. In just a handful of League games he showed why many had compared him to former Bologna great Roberto Mancini.

Although used in a rather unfamiliar spot on the left wing, his composure, ability to wrong-foot opponents, imagination and flair for a telling pass were much in evidence. He further enhanced his reputation with his first two Serie A goals, against Como and Milan.

Meghni does have his weaknesses. He is not particularly pacy, and his slender frame makes him rather easy to knock off the ball. But allowances are made for someone with his amazing skills – apparently, Juventus, Inter and Milan would not hesitate to recruit him. No wonder Bologna have extended his contract until 2006.

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Bologna (Ita)
Country France
Born April 16, 1984, in Paris
Previous clubs INF Clairefontaine
Honours World Under-17 Championship 2001

Cesar DELGADO

He's tricky...Argentina newcomer Delgado takes on a Uruguayan defender in a warm-up friendly before the World Cup qualifying campaign got underway

Mexico-based winger who has become instantly indispensable to Argentina

"I NEVER IMAGINED that I would be involved in the World Cup qualifiers, alongside so many great players," said Cesar Delgado on the eve of the 2006 campaign. "It still hasn't sunk in that I'm here." But with two games gone it is already hard to imagine the Argentina side without him.

Delgado, just turned 22, walked into a highly-charged atmosphere. Last year's World Cup flop had strained relations between the team and the fans to near breaking point.

Delgado's only previous cap had come as part of a young side drawn exclusively from Argentinian clubs. Some of his new colleagues in the senior side had barely heard of him. It was not the easiest introduction to competitive international football.

But while the crowd booed and his team-mates tried too hard to make up for last year's mistakes, Delgado got on with his game.

Ever since scoring on his debut for home-town club Rosario Central in September 2001, Delgado had looked an interesting prospect. One of his biggest fans is Central's Horacio Carbonari. "He set up most of our goals," said the former Derby County defender. "In terms of dribbling and all-round ability he's better than Michael Owen."

But Central's financial problems forced a sale. Where previously Mexican clubs picked up the rejects from Argentinian football, now they can afford the young stars. Delgado recently signed for Cruz Azul and has made an excellent start in his new surroundings, in addition to taking his club form straight into the World Cup qualifiers.

He has replaced his idol, Ariel Ortega, on Argentina's right wing, and the early signs are that he could be an even more useful player. He is certainly more direct. Delgado moves with such natural athleticism he appears to glide past his marker before curling in crosses of devilish precision. Although naturally right-footed he can switch wings, and while his finishing can be improved he is capable of getting on the scoresheet – as he proved with a glorious solo goal against Venezuela.

His new team-mates certainly know who he is now. Hernan Crespo was delighted with the service he received, and Juan Sebastian Veron was also won over. "I really liked what Delgado did," he said. "Not only is he showing strength of personality, but also he really wants to enjoy himself on the pitch, which is very important."

Delgado's approach is infectious and is doing a great deal to lift the team out of their post-World Cup depression. "I'm not worried by the responsibilities," he says. "Pulling on the Argentina shirt is a source of pride. The coach [Marcelo Bielsa] has put his trust in me, and that has given me confidence."

Bielsa is likely to be trusting his new winger for some time to come. Miguel Angel Russo, his coach at Rosario, says: "With his talent and strong character there is no limit to what Delgado can achieve. He's arrived in the national team to stay."

Tim Vickery

FACT FILE

Club Cruz Azul (Mex)
Country Argentina
Born August 18, 1981, in Rosario
Previous club Rosario Central
International debut July 2003, v Uruguay
International caps 3 (1 goal)

OKAN Koc

Under-21 star stirring old Istanbul rivalry

FIERY GALATASARAY BOSS Fatih Terim is still seething after highly-rated Genclerbirligi right-winger Okan Koc was snatched from under his nose by Istanbul rivals Besiktas.

The Turkish Under-21 star had met Terim and apparently shaken hands on the move. But Genclerbirligi president Ilhan Cavcav had other ideas. He rejected Gala's offer out of hand, and within 48 hours Okan was on his way to Besiktas in exchange for £1.1 million, plus three players.

A storm of controversy ensued. Terim rang a live TV sports show to hit out at the behaviour of Cavcav and Besiktas vice-chairman Husnu Guruli. Meanwhile, the media ran stories that Cavcav had put Okan under heavy pressure to sign for Besiktas.

The president vehemently denied the charge, saying he had treated Okan like a son since signing him from Second Division Canakkale Dardanelspor in early 2002 and that Besiktas had simply tabled a more attractive package. "I told Terim the transfer was on if he gave us Berkant, Sabri and Sedat [a trio of young Galatasaray midfielders]," claimed Cavcav. "He agreed, then phoned back the next day to ask if we would consider swapping Okan for the Brazilians Joao Batista and Fabio Pinto. I replied it was unacceptable and that was the end of the matter."

Okan is a cunning and speedy winger with the ability to wriggle out of the tightest spots and deliver inviting crosses. The 21-year-old often proved unstoppable for Genclerbirligi last season, creating goals and chances galore as the Ankara club took third place, their best League finish.

Some argue that Besiktas will not bring out the best in him, that his brand of instinctive wing-play will be suffocated by the safety-first tactical schemes of the Black Eagles' Romanian coach Mircea Lucescu. But for now Okan is looking decidedly on the bright side.

"It's an honour to be a Besiktas player," he says. "I'm proud the Turkish champions thought of me to help them stay on the winning track. The only way to repay them is with a lot of top performances at home and in the Champions League."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Besiktas
Country Turkey
Born January 22, 1982, in Canakkale
Previous clubs Canakkale Dardanelspor, Genclerbirligi

Prize guy...winger Okan joined Besiktas even though Gala thought they had a deal

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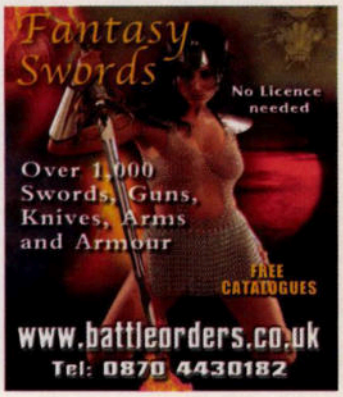

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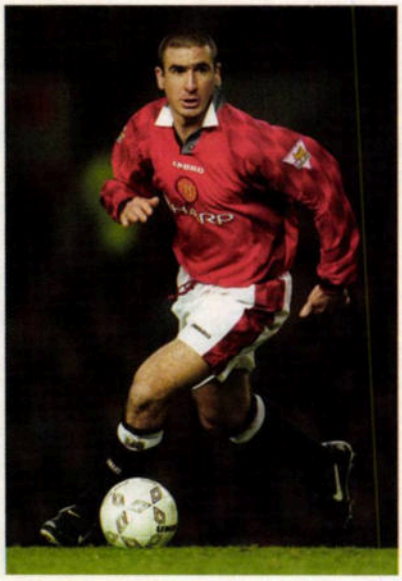

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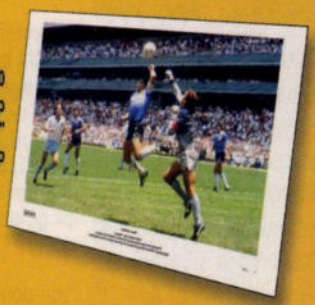

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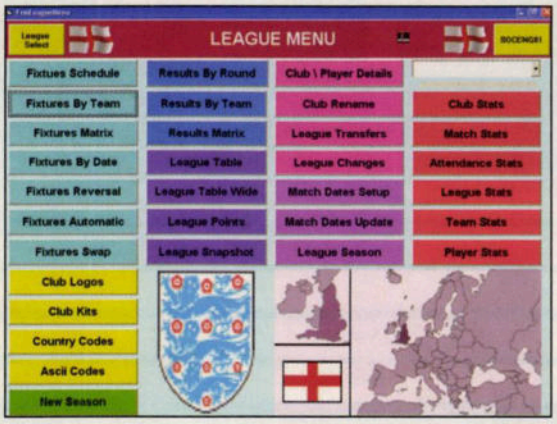

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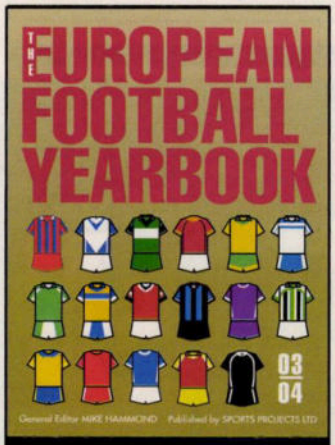

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Bounty after the mutiny

England put troubles behind them to join Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy and Switzerland in finals

We're through...David Beckham celebrates the 0-0 draw in Istanbul

AFTER THE MUTINY, the bounty. Following a build-up dominated by unprofessional behaviour, England gave a thoroughly professional performance against Turkey in Istanbul, holding the hosts to a 0-0 draw and gaining the point needed to qualify for next summer's European Championship finals.

David Beckham could afford to sky a first-half penalty over the bar, while Paul Scholes and Wayne Rooney both missed excellent chances. Turkey, nervous at the prospect of achieving a victory that would catapault them above England in Group 7 and into the finals, were unable to repeat the slick football seen at last year's World Cup. Against opponents whose earlier problems had united them, Turkey failed to show.

The Turkish authorities mounted an unprecedented security operation to ensure that no English fans attended the game at Fenerbahce's Sukru Saracoglu stadium. A few English faces were spotted in the 42,000 crowd, although 45 known hooligans were turned away at Istanbul airport, while just seven were prevented from entering the stadium.

But the game was not without incident off the pitch. A half-time scuffle between Beckham and Turkish defender Alpay prompted referee Pierluigi Collina to invite both players to his dressing-room – a move that defused the situation.

England were without striker Michael Owen and, more controversially, defender Rio Ferdinand, who had been dropped from the squad after failing to attend a random drugs test at Manchester United's training ground on September 23. Ferdinand claimed he had forgotten to take the test because he was too occupied by thoughts of moving house that day, though he had been photographed shopping in central Manchester in the afternoon.

FA chief executive Mark Palios, keen to be seen acting tough on drugs and indiscipline, refused to countenance the return of Ferdinand to the squad. This was despite the unprecedented threat of strike action by Ferdinand's England team-mates, led by Gary Neville, and a suggestion of legal action by his club.

The players quickly backed down in the face of strong opposition from the FA and general public. In the end, Ferdinand was not missed, Chelsea's John Terry giving a strong performance alongside Sol Campbell in central defence. The Manchester United contingent of Neville, Nicky Butt and Scholes, despite their earlier insurrection, all contributed to a confident, determined England display.

They were joined in next summer's finals by Denmark, Greece, Switzerland, Germany and Italy.

Denmark secured the draw they needed to top Group 2 when they held Bosnia 1-1 in Sarajevo. The Danes took an early lead when Thomas Gravesen set up Martin Jorgensen in the 12th minute. Bosnia, needing a win themselves to top the group, equalised six minutes before half-time when Elvir Bolic headed in Hasan Salihamidzic's cross.

Half-time substitute Elvir Baljic came closest to scrambling a winner, but Denmark, who had Gravesen sent off in the final minutes for a second yellow card, held on.

"Denmark showed they are a better team. They also entered this match relaxed while we completely failed on the psychological level," said Bosnia coach Blaz Sliskovic. He was critical of UEFA's decision to switch the tie from Zenica's Bilino Polje stadium, where Bosnia are undefeated, because the ground did not meet required standards.

Bosnia also missed out on the play-off place after Norway leapfrogged them and Romania into second spot by beating Luxembourg 1-0 in Oslo. Tore Andre Flo scored Norway's goal from close range in the 18th minute.

Greece sealed their place at the top of Group 6, qualifying for the European finals for the first time since 1980. Their 1-0 win over Northern Ireland in Athens, courtesy of a 69th-minute penalty from man of the match Vasilis Tsartas, was a record sixth successive victory for the

PLAY-OFFS

Croatia v Slovenia
Latvia v Turkey
Russia v Wales
Scotland v Holland
Spain v Norway
First legs: November 15 or 16
Second legs: November 18 or 19

QUALIFIERS

Portugal (hosts)
France
Denmark
Czech Republic
Sweden
Germany
Greece
England
Bulgaria
Italy
Switzerland

Top performance...Switzerland beat Ireland 2-0 to qualify as winners of Group 10

national team. "It's a special moment," said Greece's German coach Otto Rehhagel. "The most important thing we've achieved here in the last two years is the team spirit. It runs through the team on the pitch and everyone on the bench, as you saw tonight."

Spain, despite thrashing Armenia 4-0, had to settle for second place. Goals from Juan Carlos Valeron and Raul and a double from substitute Jose Antonio Reyes gave the Spanish a comfortable victory in Yerevan.

Switzerland booked their place in the finals after beating the Republic of Ireland 2-0 in Basle. Hakan Yakin opened the scoring after six minutes and Alexander Frei added a second after an hour to secure an easy win against an Irish side that failed to rise to the occasion.

Ireland manager Brian Kerr acknowledged: "Sometimes you have to admit that the other team were better than you were on the day." Ireland missed out completely after Russia held on to second spot after beating Georgia 3-1 in Moscow.

Both Germany and Italy, who had gone into their respective games against Iceland and Azerbaijan needing a point to secure automatic qualification, had comfortable victories.

Fredi Bobic continued his international rehabilitation with the second goal in Germany's 3-0 win over Iceland in Hamburg. But coach Rudi Voller reserved particular praise for defender Christian Worns and midfielder Michael Ballack.

"It's the best performance for Germany I've ever seen from Worns," Voller said. "Michael Ballack proved again how precious he is to the team. He gave us the confidence we needed by putting us 1-0 up and was exceptional in a leading role."

Kevin Kuranyi, who set up Bobic's goal, added a third, though Iceland were aggrieved that Herman Hreidarsson had a goal disallowed for offside with the score at 1-0.

Manchester United youngster Darren Fletcher added to his growing reputation by scoring the winner with his first touch as a substitute in Scotland's game at home to Lithuania. With Iceland's defeat, the 1-0 Scottish victory ensured a play-off place for Berti Vogts' side.

Italy easily beat Azerbaijan 4-0 in Reggio Calabria to confirm their status as winners of Group 9. Goals from Christian Vieri, Filippo Inzaghi (two) and Marco Di Vajo emphasised Italy's strength-in-depth in attack. Inzaghi's double took him past Paolo Rossi's tally of 20 international goals.

Wales took the play-off spot behind Italy despite being beaten 3-2 by Serbia & Montenegro in Cardiff.

One of the most surprising results of the final round of qualifying matches was in Group 4, where Latvia beat already-qualified Sweden 1-0 in Stockholm. After Maris Verpakovskis scored in the 22nd minute, the Latvians clung on for victory. They played the last 17 minutes of the match with 10 men after Dzintars Zirnis was sent off and survived a penalty scare when Marcus Allback missed a spot-kick three minutes from time.

In Group 1, France completed a clean sweep of eight victories when they beat Israel 3-0 in Paris. The win also equalled the record of 12 successive victories set by Michel Platini's side in 1984. Slovenia, already guaranteed second place, could afford to only draw, 2-2, away to Cyprus.

In Group 8, where Bulgaria had already qualified automatically, Croatia took second place after beating the Bulgarians 1-0 in Zagreb. Ivica Olic, a half-time substitute, needed just three minutes to score, converting a pass from Dado Prso. Belgium thus missed out on the play-off spot, despite beating Estonia 2-0 in Liege.

Gavin Hamilton

EURO 2004 QUALIFIERS

Group 1

Oct 11 - Limassol
Cyprus 2 (S Georgiou 74, Yiasoumi 84)
Slovenia 2 (Siljak 12, 42)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 2,346. **Ref:** Ovrebo (Nor)
Cyprus: N Panayiotou - S Georgiou, N Georgiou (Lambrou 80), Antoniou, N Nicolaou, Elia, M Constantinou (Charalambous 46), Yiasoumi, Okkarides, Iakovou, Engomitis (Eleftheriou 42).
Slovenia: Simeunovic - Cipot (Bulajic 26), Vugdalic, Knavs, Sukalo, N Ceh, Siljak, Pavlin, Rudonja (Koren 85), Kapic, Acimovic.

Oct 11 - Saint-Denis
France 3 (Henry 9, Trezeguet 25, Boumsong 43)
Israel 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 57,009. **Ref:** Bolognino (Ita)
France: Barthez - Reveillere, Thuram, Boumsong, Lizarazu, Dacourt, Pedretti, Pires (Giuly 85), Zidane, Henry (Cisse 77), Trezeguet (Marlet 85).
Israel: Davidovich - Harazi, Benado, Gershon, Keisi, Zeituni (Balili 89), Tal, Badir (Udi 76), Benayoun, Zandberg (Abuksis 46), Revivo.

GROUP 1 - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	8	8	0	0	29	2	24
Slovenia	8	4	2	2	15	12	14
Israel	8	2	3	3	9	11	9
Cyprus	8	2	2	4	9	18	8
Malta	8	0	1	7	5	24	1

07.09.02 .....Cyprus-France 1-2
07.09.02 .....Slovenia-Malta.....3-0
12.10.02 .....France-Slovenia.....5-0
12.10.02 .....Malta-Israel.....0-2
16.10.02 .....Malta-France 0-4
20.11.02 .....Cyprus-Malta 2-1
29.03.03 .....Cyprus-Israel.....1-1
29.03.03 .....France-Malta 6-0
02.04.03 .....Israel-France.....1-2
02.04.03 .....Slovenia-Cyprus.....4-1
30.04.03 .....Israel-Cyprus.....2-0
30.04.03 .....Malta-Slovenia.....1-3
07.06.03 .....Israel-Slovenia 0-0
07.06.03 .....Malta-Cyprus 1-2
06.09.03 .....France-Cyprus 5-0
06.09.03 .....Slovenia-Israel 3-1
10.09.03 .....Israel-Malta.....2-2
10.09.03 .....Slovenia-France.....0-2
11.10.03 .....Cyprus-Slovenia.....2-2
11.10.03 .....France-Israel.....3-0

Group 2

Oct 11 - Sarajevo
Bosnia-Herzegovina 1 (Bolic 39)
Denmark 1 (Martin Jorgensen 12)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 35,500. **Ref:** Barber (Eng)
Bosnia: Hasagic - Spahic (Baljic 46), Music, Konjic (Hrgovic 79), Hibic, Bajramovic, Grujic (Biscevic 85), Barbarez, Salihamidzic, Beslija, Bolic.
Denmark: Sorensen - Wieghorst, Henriksen, Laursen, Helveg, N Jensen (Per Nielsen 90), Gravesen, Gronkjaer (Larsen 85), Poulsen, Tomasson, Martin Jorgensen (Rommedahl 55).
Sent off: Gravesen 90min.

Oct 11 - Oslo
Norway 1 (T A Flo 18)
Luxembourg 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 22,255. **Ref:** Szabo (Hun)
Norway: E Johnsen - Basma, Lundekvam, H Berg, Riise, R Strand, Andresen, Winsnes (Andersen 80), H Flo (F Johnsen 69), T A Flo (Rushfeldt 85), Brattbakk.
Luxembourg: Besic - Peters, Hoffmann, Schauls, Federspiel, Mannon (Di Domenico 71), Remy, Strasser, Leweck, Braun, Huss.

GROUP 2 - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	8	4	3	1	15	9	15
Norway	8	4	2	2	9	5	14
Romania	8	4	2	2	21	9	14
Bosnia-Herz	8	4	1	3	7	8	13
Luxembourg	8	0	0	8	0	21	0

07.09.02 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Romania 0-3
07.09.02 .....Norway-Denmark.....2-2
12.10.02 .....Denmark-Luxembourg.....2-0
12.10.02 .....Romania-Norway 0-1
16.10.02 .....Luxembourg-Romania 0-7
16.10.02 .....Norway-Bosnia-Herzegovina 2-0
29.03.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Luxembourg ..2-0
29.03.03 .....Romania-Denmark.....2-5
02.04.03 .....Denmark-Bosnia-Herzegovina.....0-2
02.04.03 .....Luxembourg-Norway 0-2
07.06.03 .....Denmark-Norway.....1-0
07.06.03 .....Romania-Bosnia-Herzegovina 2-0
11.06.03 .....Luxembourg-Denmark 0-2
11.06.03 .....Norway-Romania 1-1
06.09.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Norway 1-0
06.09.03 .....Romania-Luxembourg 4-0
10.09.03 .....Denmark-Romania.....2-2
10.09.03 .....Luxembourg-Bosnia-Herzegovina ..0-1
11.10.03 .....Bosnia-Herzegovina-Denmark.....1-1
11.10.03 .....Norway-Luxembourg 1-0

Group 3

Oct 11 - Vienna
Austria 2 (Haas 51, Ivanschitz 77)
Czech Republic 3 (Jankulovski 27, Vachousek 79, Koller 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 32,350. **Ref:** Kasnaferis (Gre)
Austria: Mandl - Standfest, Stranzl, Martin Hiden, Pogatetz, Aufhauser, Schopp, Flogel (Dospel 68), Glieder (Wagner 68), Ivanschitz, Haas (Linz 76). *Sent off: Schopp 63min.*
Czech Republic: Cech - Petrous, Galasek, Bolf, Jankulovski (Vorisek 83), Heinz (Koller 68), Stajner, Nedved, Lokvenc, Vachousek, Jiranek (Tyce 41).

Oct 11 - Eindhoven
Holland 5 (Kluivert 43, Sneijder 51, Van Hooijdonk pen 74, Van der Vaart 80, Robben 89)
Moldova 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,995. **Ref:** Siric (Cro)
Holland: Van der Sar - Reiziger (Makaay 33), Stam, Ooijer, Van Bronckhorst, Van der Meyde, Cocu, Sneijder, Overmars (Robben 65), Kluivert (Van Hooijdonk 71), Van der Vaart.
Moldova: Hmaruc - Covalenco (Testemitanu 63), Savinov, Valuta, Catinsus, Covaliciuc, Priganiuc, Ivanov (Miterev 82), Cebotari, Barisev, Dadu (Golban 74).

GROUP 3 - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Republic	8	7	1	0	23	5	22
Holland	8	6	1	1	20	6	19
Austria	8	3	0	5	12	14	9
Moldova	8	2	0	6	5	19	6
Belarus	8	1	0	7	4	20	3

07.09.02 .....Austria-Moldova.....2-0
07.09.02 .....Holland-Belarus 3-0
12.10.02 .....Belarus-Austria 0-2
12.10.02 .....Moldova-Czech Republic 0-2
16.10.02 .....Austria-Holland 0-3
16.10.02 .....Czech Republic-Belarus.....2-0
29.03.03 .....Belarus-Moldova.....2-1
29.03.03 .....Holland-Czech Republic.....1-1
02.04.03 .....Czech Republic-Austria.....4-0
02.04.03 .....Moldova-Holland.....1-2
07.06.03 .....Belarus-Holland 0-2
07.06.03 .....Moldova-Austria.....1-0
11.06.03 .....Austria-Belarus 5-0
11.06.03 .....Czech Republic-Moldova 5-0
06.09.03 .....Belarus-Czech Republic.....1-3
06.09.03 .....Holland-Austria 3-1
10.09.03 .....Czech Republic-Holland.....3-1
10.09.03 .....Moldova-Belarus.....2-1
11.10.03 .....Austria-Czech Republic.....2-3
11.10.03 .....Holland-Moldova.....5-0

Group 4

Oct 11 - Budapest
Hungary 1 (Szabics 49)
Poland 2 (Niedzielan 10, 62)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,500. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)
Hungary: Kiraly - Bodog, Dragoner, Juhar, Boor, Lipcsei (Gera 46), Dardai, Fuzi, Lisztes, M Feher (Kenesei 65), Szabics.
Poland: Dudek - Klos, J Bak, Rzasa, Michal Zewlakow, Sobolewski, Szymkowiak (M Lewandowski 85), Mila (Kosowski 53), Krzynowek, Rasiak, Niedzielan (Saganowski 87).

Oct 11 - Stockholm
Sweden 0
Latvia 1 (Verpakovskis 23)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 32,095. **Ref:** De Santis (Ita)
Sweden: Isaksson - Lucic (Dorsin 46), Mellberg, Michael Svensson, C Andersson (A Johansson 81), Jakobsson, M Nilsson, A Svensson, Kallstrom (Ibrahimovic 64), Allback, M Jonson.

Latvia: Kolinko - Stepanovs, Astafjevs, Zemlinskis, Lobanovs, Blagonadezdins, Zirnis, Bleidelis, Verpakovskis (Stolcers 87), Rubins (Pucinks 81), Rimkus (Isakovs 75). *Sent off: Zirnis 73min.*

GROUP 4 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	8	5	2	1	19	3	17
Latvia	8	5	1	2	10	6	16
Poland	8	4	1	3	11	7	13
Hungary	8	3	2	3	15	9	11
San Marino	8	0	0	8	0	30	0

07.09.02 .....Latvia-Sweden 0-0
07.09.02 .....San Marino-Poland 0-2
12.10.02 .....Poland-Latvia 0-1
12.10.02 .....Sweden-Hungary 1-1
16.10.02 .....Hungary-San Marino 3-0
20.11.02 .....San Marino-Latvia 0-1
29.03.03 .....Poland-Hungary 0-0
02.04.03 .....Hungary-Sweden 1-2
02.04.03 .....Poland-San Marino 5-0
30.04.03 .....Latvia-San Marino 3-0
07.06.03 .....Hungary-Latvia 3-1
07.06.03 .....San Marino-Sweden 0-6
11.06.03 .....San Marino-Hungary 0-5
11.06.03 .....Sweden-Poland 3-0
06.09.03 .....Latvia-Poland 0-2
06.09.03 .....Sweden-San Marino 5-0
10.09.03 .....Latvia-Hungary 3-1
10.09.03 .....Poland-Sweden 0-2
11.10.03 .....Hungary-Poland 1-2
11.10.03 .....Sweden-Latvia 0-1

Group 5

Oct 11 - Hamburg
Germany 3 (Ballack 9, Bobic 59, Kuranyi 79)
Iceland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,780. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)
Germany: Kahn - Friedrich, Ramelow, Worns, Hinkel, Baumann, Rahn, Schneider, Ballack, Bobic (Klose 70), Kuranyi (Neuville 85).
Iceland: Arason - O O Bjarnason, Vidarsson, Hreidarsson, I Sigurdsson (Dadason 65), Gretarsson (V Gunnarsson 80), R Kristinsson, Ingimarsson, T Gudjonsson, E Gudjohnsen, H Sigurdsson (B Gunnarsson 80).

Oct 11 - Glasgow
Scotland 1 (Fletcher 70)
Lithuania 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,343. **Ref:** Colombo (Fra)
Scotland: Douglas - McNamara, Pressley, Dailly, Naysmith, Rae, Cameron (Fletcher 65), Ferguson, McFadden (G Alexander 90), Crawford, K Miller (Hutchison 65).
Lithuania: Stauce - Dziaukstas, Zvirgsdauskas (D Cesnauskis 46), Dedura, Regelskis (Beniusis 85), Barasa, Razanauskas, Vencevicius (Maciulevicius 79), Baravicius, Jankauskas, Poskus.

GROUP 5 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	8	5	3	0	13	4	18
Scotland	8	4	2	2	12	8	14
Iceland	8	4	1	3	11	9	13
Lithuania	8	3	1	4	7	11	10
Faroe Islands	8	0	1	7	7	18	1

07.09.02 .....Faroe Islands-Scotland 2-2
07.09.02 .....Lithuania-Germany 0-2
12.10.02 .....Iceland-Scotland 0-2
12.10.02 .....Lithuania-Faroe Islands 2-0
16.10.02 .....Germany-Faroe Islands 2-1
16.10.02 .....Iceland-Lithuania 3-0
29.03.03 .....Germany-Lithuania 1-1
29.03.03 .....Scotland-Iceland 2-1
02.04.03 .....Lithuania-Scotland 1-0
07.06.03 .....Iceland-Faroe Islands 2-1
07.06.03 .....Scotland-Germany 1-1
11.06.03 .....Faroe Islands-Germany 0-2
11.06.03 .....Lithuania-Iceland 0-3
20.08.03 .....Faroe Islands-Iceland 1-2
06.09.03 .....Iceland-Germany 0-0
06.09.03 .....Scotland-Faroe Islands 3-1
10.09.03 .....Faroe Islands-Lithuania 1-3
10.09.03 .....Germany-Scotland 2-1
11.10.03 .....Germany-Iceland 3-0
11.10.03 .....Scotland-Lithuania 1-0

Group 6

Oct 11 - Athens
Greece 1 (Tsartas pen 69)
Northern Ireland 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 15,500. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)
Greece: Nikopolidis - Dabizas (Venetidis 46), Dellas, Antzas, Seitaridis, Basinas (Zagorakis 90), Tsartas, Vryzas, Fissas, Haristeas (Nikolaidis 46), Giannakopoulos.
N Ireland: Taylor - Baird, A Hughes, McCartney, Kennedy, Gillespie (Smith 63), Griffin (Jones 88), M Hughes, Whitley, Elliott (Murdock 70), Healy. *Sent off: McCartney 69min.*

Oct 11 - Yerevan
Armenia 0
Spain 4 (Valeron 7, Raul 76, Reyes 87, 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Meier (Swi)
Armenia: Berezovski - Melikyan, K Dokhoyan, Hovsepian, Vardanyan, R Hachatryan, Secu (Bilibio 88), Voskanyan (Movsesian 78), Sarkisyan, Artavazd Karamian, Arman Karamian (G Petrosyan 87).
Spain: Casillas - Michel Salgado, Ivan Helguera, Marchena, Puyol, Baraja (Xabi Alonso 66), Albelda, Etxeberria, Valeron, Vicente (Reyes 62), Raul (Luque 78).

GROUP 6 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Greece	8	6	0	2	8	4	18
Spain	8	5	2	1	16	4	17
Ukraine	8	2	4	2	11	10	10
Armenia	8	2	1	5	7	16	7
Northern Ireland	8	0	3	5	0	8	3

07.09.02 .....Armenia-Ukraine 2-2
07.09.02 .....Greece-Spain 0-2
12.10.02 .....Spain-Northern Ireland 3-0
12.10.02 .....Ukraine-Greece 2-0
16.10.02 .....Greece-Armenia 2-0
16.10.02 .....Northern Ireland-Ukraine 0-0
29.03.03 .....Armenia-Northern Ireland 1-0
29.03.03 .....Ukraine-Spain 2-2
02.04.03 .....Northern Ireland-Greece 0-2
02.04.03 .....Spain-Armenia 3-0
07.06.03 .....Spain-Greece 0-1
07.06.03 .....Ukraine-Armenia 4-3
11.06.03 .....Greece-Ukraine 1-0
11.06.03 .....Northern Ireland-Spain 0-0
06.09.03 .....Armenia-Greece 0-1
06.09.03 .....Ukraine-Northern Ireland 0-0
10.09.03 .....Northern Ireland-Armenia 0-1
10.09.03 .....Spain-Ukraine 2-1
11.10.03 .....Armenia-Spain 0-4
11.10.03 .....Greece-Northern Ireland 1-0

Group 7

Oct 11 - Vaduz
Liechtenstein 0
Slovakia 2 (Vittek 40, 56)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Hyytia (Fin)
Liechtenstein: Heeb - Telser, Maierhofer, D Hasler, Michael Stocklasa, Ritter, T Beck (R Beck 46), M Beck (Rohrer 46), D'Elia (R Buchel 76), M Frick, F Burgmeier.
Slovakia: Konig - Klimpl, Leitner, B Labant, Varga, Zabavnik, Kisel (Urban 46), Michalik (Babnic 84), Janocko, S Nemeth (Oravec 76), Vittek.

Oct 11 - Istanbul
Turkey 0
England 0
Att: 42,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)
Turkey: Rustu - Fatih Akyel, Alpay, Bulent, Ibrahim Uzulmez, Okan Buruk (Ilhan 67), Tugay, Emre Belozoglu (Ergun 79), Sergen (Tuncay 61), Nihat, Hakan Sukur.
England: James - G Neville, Terry, Campbell, Ashley Cole, Beckham, Butt, Gerrard, Scholes (Lampard 90), Heskey (Vassell 68), Rooney (Dyer 73).

GROUP 7 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	8	6	2	0	14	5	20
Turkey	8	6	1	1	17	5	19
Slovakia	8	3	1	4	11	9	10
Macedonia	8	1	3	4	11	14	6
Liechtenstein	8	0	1	7	2	22	1

07.09.02 .....Turkey-Slovakia 3-0
08.09.02 .....Liechtenstein-Macedonia 1-1
12.10.02 .....Macedonia-Turkey 1-2
12.10.02 .....Slovakia-England 1-2
16.10.02 .....England-Macedonia 2-2
16.10.02 .....Turkey-Liechtenstein 5-0
29.03.03 .....Liechtenstein-England 0-2
29.03.03 .....Macedonia-Slovakia 0-2
02.04.03 .....England-Turkey 2-0
02.04.03 .....Slovakia-Liechtenstein 4-0
07.06.03 .....Macedonia-Liechtenstein 3-1
07.06.03 .....Slovakia-Turkey 0-1
11.06.03 .....England-Slovakia 2-1
11.06.03 .....Turkey-Macedonia 3-2
06.09.03 .....Liechtenstein-Turkey 0-3
06.09.03 .....Macedonia-England 1-2
10.09.03 .....England-Liechtenstein 2-0
10.09.03 .....Slovakia-Macedonia 1-1
11.10.03 .....Liechtenstein-Slovakia 0-2
11.10.03 .....Turkey-England 0-0

Group 8

Oct 11 - Liege
Belgium 2 (Reinumae og 45, Buffel 61)
Estonia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 26,000. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Belgium: De Vlieger - Deflandre, Van Buyten, Simons, Van Damme (Deschacht 56), M Mpenza, Baseggio, Clement, Goor, Sonck (E Mpenza 80), Buffel (Roussel 87).
Estonia: Poom - Jaager, Lemsalu, Piiroja, U Rooba, Reinumae, Haavistu (Zahhovaiko 78), Reim, M Rooba, Klavan (Terehhov 64), Viikmae.

Oct 11 - Zagreb
Croatia 1 (Olic 48)
Bulgaria 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 37,000. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Croatia: Pletikosa - D Simic, Vranjes, R Kovac, Tudor, Zivkovic, Rapajic (Babic 54), Srna (Olic 46), Prso, J Leko, Mornar (Rosso 76).
Bulgaria: Zdravkov - Krastev, Kirilov, I Petkov, Pazin, Borimirov, Dimitrov (Manchev 62), Peev (Jankovic 72), Hristov, Stilian Petrov, Berbatov.

GROUP 8 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bulgaria	8	5	2	1	13	4	17
Croatia	8	5	1	2	12	4	16
Belgium	8	5	1	2	11	9	16
Estonia	8	2	2	4	4	6	8
Andorra	8	0	0	8	1	18	0

07.09.02 .....Belgium-Bulgaria 0-2
07.09.02 .....Croatia-Estonia 0-0
12.10.02 .....Andorra-Belgium 0-1
12.10.02 .....Bulgaria-Croatia 2-0
16.10.02 .....Bulgaria-Andorra 2-1
16.10.02 .....Estonia-Belgium 0-1
29.03.03 .....Croatia-Belgium 4-0
02.04.03 .....Croatia-Andorra 2-0
02.04.03 .....Estonia-Bulgaria 0-0
30.04.03 .....Andorra-Estonia 0-2
07.06.03 .....Bulgaria-Belgium 2-2
07.06.03 .....Estonia-Andorra 2-0
11.06.03 .....Belgium-Andorra 3-0
11.06.03 .....Estonia-Croatia 0-1
06.09.03 .....Andorra-Croatia 0-3
06.09.03 .....Bulgaria-Estonia 2-0
10.09.03 .....Andorra-Bulgaria 0-3
10.09.03 .....Belgium-Croatia 2-1
11.10.03 .....Belgium-Estonia 2-0
11.10.03 .....Croatia-Bulgaria 1-0

Group 9

Oct 11 - Reggio Calabria
Italy 4 (Vieri 16, F Inzaghi 24, 88, Di Vaio 65)
Azerbaijan 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Dougal (Sco)
Italy: Buffon - Oddo, Nesta (Ferrari 77), Cannavaro, Zambrotta, Camoranesi (Gattuso 87), Zanetti, Perrotta, Totti, F Inzaghi, Vieri (Di Vaio 55).
Azerbaijan: Kramarenko (Gasanzade 56) - Agaev, A Kerimov, Imamaliev, Emin Guliev, K Guliev, M Gurbanov (R Mamedov 84), Tagizade (V Vasilyev 74), Yadullayev, Sadigov, S Aliyev.

Oct 11 - Cardiff
Wales 2 (Hartson pen 24, Earnshaw 90)
Serbia & Montenegro 3 (Vukic 4, Milosevic 82, Ljuboja 87)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 72,514. **Ref:** Stuchlik (Aut)
Wales: P Jones - Weston (Edwards 73), Delaney, Gabbidon, Barnard, C Robinson (Oster 88), Speed, Earnshaw, Giggs, Bellamy, Hartson (Blake 86).
Serbia & Montenegro: Jevric - Gavrancic, Bunjevcevic, N Djordjevic, Cirkovic (N Brnovic 74), Vukic, Mladenovic, Boskovic, Sarac, Kezman (Milosevic 60), D Kovacevic (Ljuboja 78).

GROUP 9 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	8	5	2	1	17	4	17
Wales	8	4	1	3	13	10	13
Serbia & M'negro	8	3	3	2	11	11	12
Finland	8	3	1	4	9	10	10
Azerbaijan	8	1	1	6	5	20	4

07.09.02 .....Azerbaijan-Italy 0-2
07.09.02 .....Finland-Wales 0-2
12.10.02 .....Finland-Azerbaijan 3-0
12.10.02 .....Italy-Serbia & Montenegro* 1-1
16.10.02 .....Wales-Italy 2-1
16.10.02 .....Serbia & Montenegro*-Finland 2-0
20.11.02 .....Azerbaijan-Wales 0-2
12.02.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Azerbaijan 2-2
29.03.03 .....Italy-Finland 2-0
29.03.03 .....Wales-Azerbaijan 4-0
07.06.03 .....Finland-Serbia & Montenegro 3-0
11.06.03 .....Azerbaijan-Serbia & Montenegro 2-1
11.06.03 .....Finland-Italy 0-2
20.08.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Wales 1-0
06.09.03 .....Azerbaijan-Finland 1-2
06.09.03 .....Italy-Wales 4-0
10.09.03 .....Serbia & Montenegro-Italy 1-1
10.09.03 .....Wales-Finland 1-1
11.10.03 .....Italy-Azerbaijan 4-0
11.10.03 .....Wales-Serbia & Montenegro 2-3
**Serbia & Montenegro played first two qualifiers as Yugoslavia*

Group 10

Oct 11 - Moscow
Russia 3 (Bulykin 29, Titov 45, Sychev 73)
Georgia 1 (Iashvili 5)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Plautz (Aut)
Russia: Ovchinnikov - Evseev, Sennikov, Titov, Karyaka (Izmailov 46), Ignashevich, Onopko, Gusev (Aldonin 63), Bulykin, Mostovoi, Kerzhakov (Sychev 56).
Georgia: Lomaia - Khizanishvili, Kemoklidze, Kobiashvili, Kvirkvelia, Tskitishvili (Asatiani 54), Nemsadze, Ashvetia (Daraselia 58), Iashvili, Dzhamarauli (Burduli 46), Demetradze.

Oct 11 - Basle
Switzerland 2 (H Yakin 6, Frei 60)
Rep Ireland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,006. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)
Switzerland: Stiel - Haas, M Yakin, P Muller, Spycher, Huggel, Vogel, H Yakin (Celestini 55), Wicky, Frei (Henchoz 90), Chapuisat (Streller 68).
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Breen, O'Shea, Harte, Duff, Holland (Kinsella 74), Healy, Kilbane (Finnan 74), Robbie Keane, Connolly (Morrison 58).

GROUP 10 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Switzerland	8	4	3	1	15	11	15
Russia	8	4	2	2	19	12	14
Rep Ireland	8	3	2	3	10	11	11
Albania	8	2	2	4	11	15	8
Georgia	8	2	1	5	8	14	7

07.09.02 .....Russia-Rep Ireland 4-2
08.09.02 .....Switzerland-Georgia 4-1
12.10.02 .....Albania-Switzerland 1-1
16.10.02 .....Rep Ireland-Switzerland 1-2
16.10.02 .....Russia-Albania 4-1
29.03.03 .....Albania-Russia 3-1
29.03.03 .....Georgia-Rep Ireland 1-2
02.04.03 .....Albania-Rep Ireland 0-0
02.04.03 .....Georgia-Switzerland 0-0
30.04.03 .....Georgia-Russia 1-0
07.06.03 .....Rep Ireland-Albania 2-1
07.06.03 .....Switzerland-Russia 2-2
11.06.03 .....Rep Ireland-Georgia 2-0
11.06.03 .....Switzerland-Albania 3-2
06.09.03 .....Georgia-Albania 3-0
06.09.03 .....Rep Ireland-Russia 1-1
10.09.03 .....Albania-Georgia 3-1
10.09.03 .....Russia-Switzerland 4-1
11.10.03 .....Russia-Georgia 3-1
11.10.03 .....Switzerland-Rep Ireland 2-0

● Where teams finished level on points, their head-to-head record was the first criterion for determining final placings.

● The 10 group winners qualify for the finals automatically; the 10 runners-up play-off in five head-to-head, home and away ties, the winners of which also qualify.

● Portugal qualify automatically for the finals as hosts.

INTERNATIONALS

Saturday, September 13

Sep 13 - Kigali - friendly
Rwanda 0
Kenya 1 (Omondi 80)
HT: 0-0

Tuesday, September 16

Sep 16 - Singapore - friendly
Singapore 1 (Sahdan 65)
Oman 3 (Bashir 31, 66, Iskander og 51)
HT: 0-1

Wednesday, September 17

Sep 17 - Sana'a - friendly
Yemen 3 (Al-Minj 17, Mubarak 56, Al-Shahri 89)
Sudan 2 (Ibrahim 64, Damir 83)
HT: 1-0

Friday, September 19

Sep 19 - Manama - friendly
Bahrain 4 (Hubeil, Yousuf, Al-Marzouqi, R Al-Doseri)
Lebanon 3 (Kassas, Mohammed, Al-Jamal)
HT: 3-0

Sep 19 - friendly
Jordan 0
Syria 0

Sep 19 - Sana'a - friendly
Yemen 1
Sudan 2

Saturday, September 20

Sep 20 - friendly
Namibia 1
Angola 3
HT: 1-0

Wednesday, September 24

Sep 24 - Algiers - Four-team tnmt semi
Algeria 2 (Fellahi 51, Achiou 59)
Gabon 2 (Nguema 21, Moubamba 83)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Zekkini
Algeria 4-3 on pens
Algeria: Mezair - Slatni, Haddou, Zaoui, Boudjakdji, Belhamel, Younes (Achiou 46), Fodhili (Ghazi 46), Bendebka, B Daoud (Benchergui 75), Fellahi (Bensaid 61).
Gabon: Owono - Okogo, Moubamba, Djissidadie, Kessany, Mbadinga, Nsi Akne, Nguema, Nzogue, Mintsa, Onkasa.

Sep 24 - Algiers - Four-team tnmt semi
Burkina Faso 1
Benin 0

Friday, September 26

Sep 26 - Algiers - Four-team tnmt Final
Algeria 0
Burkina Faso 0
Att: 1,500. **Ref:** Benouza
Algeria 4-3 on pens
Algeria: Gaouaoui - Rahou, Ghoul (Haddou 74), Zafour, Aribi, Ghazi, Belkaid (Boudjakdji 70), Achiou, Bensaid (Belhamel 62), Benchergui (Fellahi 46), B Daoud.
Burkina Faso: Diakite - M Tall, Kano, Ali Diallo, A Tall, Abdu Diallo, Lecor (Ouattara 42), S Diallo, Balbone, Bance (Sounou 61), Amado Ouedraogou.

Sep 26 - Algiers - Four-team tnmt 3rd-place
Gabon 4
Benin 0

Sep 26 - Kuala Lumpur - friendly
Malaysia 1 (Fadzli 90)
Indonesia 1 (Aiboy 62)
HT: 0-0

Saturday, September 27

Sep 27 - Blantyre - COSAFA CC Final, 1st leg
Malawi 1 (Mwafulirwa 83)
Zimbabwe 2 (Mbano 7, Makonese 57)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Bennett (SAf)
Malawi: Nyasulu - Msowoya, Kamanga, Gatros (Ngambi 73), Nundwe, Mponda, Mgangira (Kamwendo 60), Kondowe, Maduka, Mwafulirwa, Kanyenda.
Zimbabwe: Murambadoro - Mpofu, B Ndlovu, Kapenya, Makonese, Nyandoro, Sibanda (Kurauzione 62), Choruma (Pasuwa 89), Yohane, Mbano, Sawu.

Sep 27 - Abu Dhabi - friendly
United Arab Emirates 1 (Khalil 59)
Bahrain 4 (Bilal 18, Salman 49, Yousuf 57, Jamal 88)
HT: 0-1

Sep 27 - friendly
Yemen 2
Syria 8

Tuesday, September 30

Sep 30 - Riyadh - friendly
Saudi Arabia 1 (Basha 27)
Syria 1 (Sayed 48)
HT: 1-0
Saudi: Zaid (Sherifi) - Qadi, Hadaf, Sakri (Kriri), Doukhi (Jenoubi), Ouwairan (Mater), Noor (Wadaani), Al-Wakad (Jumaan), Al-Ghamdi, Al-Mishal (Moussa), Basha (Al-Shlhoob).
Syria: Beiruti - Mohammad, Kaishani, Ashra, Mendou, Sleiman, Boudaud, Azzam, Rached (Hussein), Al-Amnah, Sayed (Rafe).

Saturday, October 4

Oct 4 - friendly
Lesotho 5
Swaziland 2
HT: 1-1

Sunday, October 5

Oct 5 - Harare - COSAFA CC Final, 2nd leg
Zimbabwe 2 (Yohane 35, P Ndlovu 66)
Malawi 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Nkole (Zam)
Zimbabwe 4-1 on agg
Zimbabwe: Murambadoro - Mpofu, Nyandoro, B Ndlovu, Kapenya, Makonese, Sibanda, Pasuwa (Mashiri 51), Yohane, Mbano (A Ndlovu 61), P Ndlovu (Sawu 74).
Malawi: Nyasulu - Msowoya (Mgangira 54), Mabedi, Nundwe, Kamanga (Munthali 70), Kamwendo (Chavula 77), Ngambi, Kondowe, Mponda, Maduka, Mwafulirwa.

Wednesday, October 8

Oct 8 - Muscat - friendly
Oman 2 (Saleh 11, Dhabit 14)
Jordan 1 (Salim 40)
HT: 2-1

Oct 8 - Tunis - friendly
Tunisia 0
Japan 1 (Yanagisawa 39)
HT: 0-1
Tunisia: Fadhel - H Trabelsi, Ayari, Badra, Bouzaiene, Nafti (Seghayer), Chedli, Jaziri, Mhadhebi (Missaoui), Benachour (Bouazizi), Braham (Selliti).
Japan: Narazaki - Kaji, Miura, Moniwa, Nakazawa, H Nakata, Inamoto, Ono, Nakamura, T Suzuki (Okubo), Yanagisawa (Fujita).

WORLD CUP 2006 QUALIFIERS

AFRICA

Preliminary round, 1st legs

10.10.03 .....Guinea-Bissau-Mali.....2-1
11.10.03 .....Botswana-Lesotho.....4-1
11.10.03 .....Equatorial Guinea-Togo.....1-0
11.10.03 .....Madagascar-Benin.....1-1
11.10.03 .....Niger-Algeria.....0-1
11.10.03 .....Sao Tome e Principe-Libya.....0-1
11.10.03 .....Seychelles-Zambia.....0-4
11.10.03 .....Sudan-Eritrea.....3-0
11.10.03 .....Tanzania-Kenya.....0-0
11.10.03 .....Uganda-Mauritius.....3-0
12.10.03 .....Burundi-Gabon.....0-0
12.10.03 .....Chad-Angola.....3-1
12.10.03 .....Congo-Sierra Leone.....1-0
12.10.03 .....Ethiopia-Malawi.....1-3
12.10.03 .....Gambia-Liberia.....2-0
12.10.03 .....Guinea-Mozambique.....1-0
12.10.03 .....Rwanda-Namibia.....3-0
12.10.03 .....Swaziland-Cape Verde Islands.....1-1
12.10.03 .....Zimbabwe-Mauritania.....3-0
tba .....Somalia-Ghana

2nd legs, November 14-16, 2003

Winners progress to qualifying groups
Byes: Cameroon, DR Congo, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia (also Burkina Faso, handed walkover after Central African Republic withdrew from their preliminary round tie)

The 30 qualifying countries will be drawn into five groups of six, the winners of which go through to the finals

SOUTH AMERICA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Argentina	2	1	1	0	5	2	4
Chile	2	1	1	0	4	3	4
Uruguay	2	1	0	1	6	4	3
Peru	2	1	0	1	5	3	3
Ecuador	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Paraguay	2	1	0	1	5	5	3
Bolivia	2	1	0	1	4	5	3
Colombia	2	0	0	2	1	6	0
Venezuela	2	0	0	2	0	5	0

Top four in section qualify automatically for the finals; fifth-placed side enter a qualifying play-off

06.09.03 .....Argentina-Chile.....2-2
06.09.03 .....Ecuador-Venezuela.....2-0
06.09.03 .....Peru-Paraguay.....4-1
07.09.03 .....Colombia-Brazil.....1-2
07.09.03 .....Uruguay-Bolivia.....5-0
09.09.03 .....Chile-Peru.....2-1
09.09.03 .....Venezuela-Argentina.....0-3
10.09.03 .....Bolivia-Colombia.....4-0
10.09.03 .....Brazil-Ecuador.....1-0
10.09.03 .....Paraguay-Uruguay.....4-1
15/16.11.03.....Argentina-Bolivia
15/16.11.03.....Colombia-Venezuela
15/16.11.03.....Paraguay-Ecuador
15/16.11.03.....Peru-Brazil
15/16.11.03.....Uruguay-Chile
18/19.11.03.....Brazil-Uruguay
18/19.11.03.....Chile-Paraguay
18/19.11.03.....Colombia-Argentina
18/19.11.03.....Ecuador-Peru
18/19.11.03.....Venezuela-Bolivia
30/31.03.04.....Argentina-Ecuador
30/31.03.04.....Bolivia-Chile
30/31.03.04.....Paraguay-Brazil
30/31.03.04.....Peru-Colombia
30/31.03.04.....Uruguay-Venezuela
01/02.06.04.....Bolivia-Paraguay
01/02.06.04.....Brazil-Argentina
01/02.06.04.....Ecuador-Colombia
01/02.06.04.....Uruguay-Peru
01/02.06.04.....Venezuela-Chile
04/05.06.04.....Argentina-Paraguay
04/05.06.04.....Chile-Brazil
04/05.06.04.....Colombia-Uruguay
04/05.06.04.....Ecuador-Bolivia
04/05.06.04.....Peru-Venezuela
04/05.09.04.....Brazil-Bolivia
04/05.09.04.....Chile-Colombia
04/05.09.04.....Paraguay-Venezuela
04/05.09.04.....Peru-Argentina
04/05.09.04.....Uruguay-Ecuador
09/10.10.04.....Argentina-Uruguay
09/10.10.04.....Bolivia-Peru
09/10.10.04.....Colombia-Paraguay
09/10.10.04.....Ecuador-Chile
09/10.10.04.....Venezuela-Brazil
12/13.10.04.....Bolivia-Uruguay
12/13.10.04.....Brazil-Colombia
12/13.10.04.....Chile-Argentina
12/13.10.04.....Paraguay-Peru
12/13.10.04.....Venezuela-Ecuador
16/17.11.04.....Argentina-Venezuela
16/17.11.04.....Colombia-Bolivia
16/17.11.04.....Ecuador-Brazil
16/17.11.04.....Peru-Chile
16/17.11.04.....Uruguay-Paraguay
26/27.03.05.....Bolivia-Argentina
26/27.03.05.....Brazil-Peru
26/27.03.05.....Chile-Uruguay
26/27.03.05.....Ecuador-Paraguay
26/27.03.05.....Venezuela-Colombia
29/30.03.05.....Argentina-Colombia
29/30.03.05.....Bolivia-Venezuela
29/30.03.05.....Paraguay-Chile
29/30.03.05.....Peru-Ecuador
29/30.03.05.....Uruguay-Brazil
04/05.06.05.....Brazil-Paraguay
04/05.06.05.....Chile-Bolivia
04/05.06.05.....Colombia-Peru
04/05.06.05.....Ecuador-Argentina
04/05.06.05.....Venezuela-Uruguay
07/08.06.05.....Argentina-Brazil
07/08.06.05.....Chile-Venezuela
07/08.06.05.....Colombia-Ecuador
07/08.06.05.....Paraguay-Bolivia
07/08.06.05.....Peru-Uruguay
03/04.09.05.....Bolivia-Ecuador
03/04.09.05.....Brazil-Chile
03/04.09.05.....Paraguay-Argentina
03/04.09.05.....Uruguay-Colombia
03/04.09.05.....Venezuela-Peru
08/09.10.05.....Argentina-Peru
08/09.10.05.....Bolivia-Brazil
08/09.10.05.....Colombia-Chile
08/09.10.05.....Ecuador-Uruguay
08/09.10.05.....Venezuela-Paraguay
11/12.10.05.....Brazil-Venezuela
11/12.10.05.....Chile-Ecuador
11/12.10.05.....Paraguay-Colombia
11/12.10.05.....Peru-Bolivia
11/12.10.05.....Uruguay-Argentina

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP 2004

Finals schedule

In Tunisia

Group A

Jan 24: Tunisia v Rwanda, Rades
Jan 25: DR Congo v Guinea, Tunis
Jan 28: Tunisia v DR Congo, Rades
Jan 28: Guinea v Rwanda, Bizerte
Feb 1: Tunisia v Guinea, Rades
Feb 1: DR Congo v Rwanda, Bizerte

Group B

Jan 26: Burkina Faso v Senegal, Tunis
Jan 26: Kenya v Mali, Bizerte
Jan 30: Kenya v Senegal, Bizerte
Jan 30: Burkina Faso v Mali, Tunis
Feb 2: Mali v Senegal, Tunis
Feb 2: Burkina Faso v Kenya, Bizerte

Group C

Jan 25: Algeria v Cameroon, Sfax
Jan 25: Zimbabwe v Egypt, Sousse
Jan 29: Cameroon v Zimbabwe, Sousse
Jan 29: Algeria v Egypt, Sfax
Feb 3: Cameroon v Egypt, Sousse
Feb 3: Algeria v Zimbabwe, Monastir

Group D

Jan 27: Nigeria v Morocco, Monastir
Jan 27: Benin v South Africa, Sfax
Jan 31: Nigeria v South Africa, Monastir
Jan 31: Benin v Morocco, Sfax
Feb 4: Benin v Nigeria, Sfax
Feb 4: Morocco v South Africa, Sousse

Quarter-finals

Feb 7: Gp A winners v Gp B runners-up, Rades (QF1)
Feb 7: Gp B winners v Gp A runners-up, Tunis (QF2)
Feb 8: Gp C winners v Gp D runners-up, Monastir (QF3)
Feb 8: Gp D winners v Gp C runners-up, Sfax (QF4

Semi-finals

Feb 11: QF1 winners v QF3 winners, Rades
Feb 11: QF2 winners v QF4 winners, Sousse

Third-place play-off

Feb 13: Monastir

Final

Feb 14: Rades

ASIAN CUP 2004 QUALIFIERS

Group A

06.11.03 .....Thailand-Tajikistan
06.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Uzbekistan
08.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Tajikistan
08.11.03 .....Uzbekistan-Thailand
10.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Thailand
10.11.03 .....Tajikistan-Uzbekistan
17.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Thailand
17.11.03 .....Uzbekistan-Tajikistan
19.11.03 .....Tajikistan-Thailand
19.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Uzbekistan
21.11.03 .....Hong Kong-Tajikistan
21.11.03 .....Thailand-Uzbekistan

Group B

Sep 14 - Kuwait City
Kuwait 2 (B Abdullah 56, Wabran 86)
Qatar 1 (Ghanem 27)
HT: 0-1

Sep 20 - Doha
Qatar 2 (Bechir 20, 82)
Kuwait 2 (Abdelrida 25, Ateeki 70)
HT: 1-1
Sent off: Rashed (Qatar)

*Sep 24 - Doha**
Palestine 1 (Aziz 90)
Qatar 1 (Abdullah 47)
HT: 0-0
Sent off: Kouni (Qatar) 78min
**Palestine forfeited home advantage*

Sep 27 - Kuwait City
Kuwait 4 (B Abdullah 25, 78, Mutawa 47, Abdelrida 53)
Singapore 0
HT: 1-0
Sent off: Tan Kim Leng (Singapore) 63min

Sep 27 - Doha
Qatar 2 (Walid Ahmed 67, Walid Hamza 90)
Palestine 1 (Florentio 76)
HT: 0-0

Oct 5 - Kuwait City
Kuwait 2 (Wabran 24, Mutawa 59)
Palestine 1 (Amer 72)
HT: 1-0

*Oct 8 - Kuwait City**
Palestine 0
Kuwait 4 (B Abdullah 36, pen 57, Mutawa 42, 47)
HT: 0-2
**Palestine forfeited home advantage*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kuwait	6	5	1	0	17	5	16
Qatar	4	1	2	1	6	6	5
Palestine	4	0	1	3	3	9	1
Singapore	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

04.09.03 .....Singapore-Kuwait 1-3
14.09.03 .....Kuwait-Qatar 2-1
20.09.03 .....Qatar-Kuwait 2-2
24.09.03 .....Palestine-Qatar 1-1
27.09.03 .....Kuwait-Singapore 4-0
27.09.03 .....Qatar-Palestine 2-1
05.10.03 .....Kuwait-Palestine 2-1
08.10.03 .....Palestine-Kuwait 0-4
19.10.03 .....Singapore-Palestine
22.10.03 .....Palestine-Singapore
19.11.03 .....Qatar-Singapore
29.11.03 .....Singapore-Qatar

Group C

Oct 6 - Jeddah
Saudi Arabia 7 (Basha 15, 20, 25, 35, Noor 64, Al-Shihoob pen 72, Al-Mishal 78)
Yemen 0
HT: 4-0
Sent off: Al-Wakad (Saudi)

Oct 6 - Jeddah
Indonesia 2 (Arif 19, 50)
Bhutan 0
HT: 1-0

Oct 8 - Jeddah
Yemen 0
Indonesia 3 (Uston 51, 90, Arif 62)
HT: 0-0
Sent off: Zuhra (Yemen) 37min

Oct 8 - Jeddah
Saudi Arabia 6 (Basha 7, Jumaan 9, 25, Al-Khatani 28, Jenoubi 43, Wadaani)
Bhutan 0
HT: 5-0

Oct 10 - Jeddah
Saudi Arabia 5
Indonesia 0
HT: 1-0

Oct 10 - Jeddah
Bhutan 0
Yemen 8
HT: 0-4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saudi Arabia	3	3	0	0	18	0	9
Indonesia	3	2	0	1	5	5	6
Yemen	3	1	0	2	8	10	3
Bhutan	3	0	0	3	0	16	0

06.10.03 .....Saudi Arabia-Yemen 7-0
06.10.03 .....Indonesia-Bhutan 2-0
08.10.03 .....Yemen-Indonesia 0-3
08.10.03 .....Saudi Arabia-Bhutan 6-0
10.10.03 .....Saudi Arabia-Indonesia 5-0
10.10.03 .....Bhutan-Yemen 0-8
13.10.03 .....Yemen-Saudi Arabia
13.10.03 .....Bhutan-Indonesia
15.10.03 .....Indonesia-Yemen
15.10.03 .....Bhutan-Saudi Arabia
17.10.03 .....Indonesia-Saudi Arabia
17.10.03 .....Yemen-Bhutan

Group D

Sep 26 - Amman
Jordan 3 (Salim 40, Shelbaya 45, Shaqran 80)
Iran 2 (Golmohammadi 6, Majidi 60)
HT: 2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	2	1	0	1	6	4	3
Lebanon	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Jordan	2	1	0	1	4	6	3
North Korea	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

04.09.03 .....North Korea-Lebanon 0-1
05.09.03 .....Iran-Jordan 4-1
26.09.03 .....Jordan-Iran 3-2
tba .....Lebanon-North Korea
17.10.03 .....Jordan-Lebanon
18.10.03 .....North Korea-Iran
12.11.03 .....Iran-North Korea
12.11.03 .....Lebanon-Jordan
18.11.03 .....Jordan-North Korea
19.11.03 .....Lebanon-Iran
28.11.03 .....Iran-Lebanon
28.11.03 .....North Korea-Jordan

Group E

Sep 25 - Incheon
Nepal 0
Oman 9
HT: 0-5

Sep 25 - Incheon
South Korea 5 (Lee Ki-hyung, Cho Jae-jin, Kim Do-hoon, Kim Dae-eui, Woo Sung-yong)
Vietnam 0

Sep 27 - Incheon
Vietnam 5 (Pham Van Quyen 2, Phan Thanh Binh 2, Nguyen Tuan Phong)
Nepal 0
HT: 4-0

Sep 27 - Incheon
South Korea 1 (Choi Sung-kuk 45)
Oman 0
HT: 1-0

Sep 29 - Incheon
Oman 6
Vietnam 0

Sep 29 - Incheon
South Korea 16 (Park Jin-sub 5, Kim Do-hoon 3, Woo Sung-yong 3, Kim Dae-eui 2, Lee Eul-yong, Lee Kwan-woo, Chung Kyung-ho)
Nepal 0
HT: 6-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea	3	3	0	0	22	0	9
Oman	3	2	0	1	15	1	6
Vietnam	3	1	0	2	5	11	3
Nepal	3	0	0	3	0	30	0

25.09.03 .....Nepal-Oman 0-9
25.09.03 .....South Korea-Vietnam 5-0
27.09.03 .....Vietnam-Nepal 5-0
27.09.03 .....South Korea-Oman 1-0
29.09.03 .....Oman-Vietnam 6-0
29.09.03 .....South Korea-Nepal 16-0
19.10.03 .....Oman-Nepal
19.10.03 .....South Korea-Vietnam
21.10.03 .....Vietnam-Nepal
21.10.03 .....Oman-South Korea
24.10.03 .....South Korea-Nepal
24.10.03 .....Oman-Vietnam

Group F

Oct 8 - Kuala Lumpur
Bahrain 1 (Farhan 71)
Iraq 5 (Younis 5, 47, 69, 82, Jassim 24)
HT: 0-2
Sent off: Rahman (Bahrain) 60min

Oct 8 - Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia 4 (Tengku 34, 79, Gilbert pen 67, og 85)
Myanmar 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Yang (Chn)

Oct 10 - Kuala Lumpur
Myanmar 1 (Soe Myat Min 77)
Bahrain 3 (Yousuf 14, Hubeil 49, Ahmed 76)
HT: 0-1

Oct 10 - Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia 0
Iraq 0
Ref: Kunthama (Tha)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iraq	2	1	1	0	5	1	4
Malaysia	2	1	1	0	4	0	4
Bahrain	2	1	0	1	4	6	3
Myanmar	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

08.10.03 .....Bahrain-Iraq 1-5
08.10.03 .....Malaysia-Myanmar 4-0
10.10.03 .....Myanmar-Bahrain 1-3
10.10.03 .....Malaysia-Iraq 0-0
12.10.03 .....Iraq-Myanmar
12.10.03 .....Malaysia-Bahrain
20.10.03 .....Malaysia-Iraq
20.10.03 .....Bahrain-Myanmar
22.10.03 .....Myanmar-Iraq
22.10.03 .....Bahrain-Malaysia
24.10.03 .....Malaysia-Myanmar
24.10.03 .....Bahrain-Iraq

Group G

15.10.03 .....Syria-Sri Lanka
18.10.03 .....Syria-Sri Lanka
19.10.03 .....Turkmenistan-UAE
30.10.03 .....UAE-Turkmenistan
07.11.03 .....Syria-UAE
09.11.03 .....Turkmenistan-Sri Lanka
12.11.03 .....Turkmenistan-Sri Lanka
14.11.03 .....UAE-Syria
18.11.03 .....UAE-Sri Lanka
21.11.03 .....Syria-Turkmenistan
22.11.03 .....UAE-Sri Lanka
29.11.03 .....Turkmenistan-Syria

Group winners and runners-up qualify for finals
China (hosts) and Japan (holders) qualify automatically for finals

INDIAN OCEAN GAMES

Group A

Aug 28: Seychelles 1 Madagascar 1.
Aug 30: Mauritius 3 Madagascar 1.
Sep 2: Mauritius 0 Seychelles 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Mauritius	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Seychelles	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Madagascar	2	0	1	1	2	4	1

Top two qualified for semi-finals

Group B

Aug 30: Reunion 1 Comoros Islands 0.
Sep 2: Comoros 0 Reunion 4.
Reunion 5-0 on agg (Comoros also qualified, however, as runners-up)

Semi-finals

Sep 4: Mauritius 5 Comoros Islands 0; Reunion 1 Seychelles 0.

Third-place play-off

Sep 6: Comoros Islands 0 Seychelles 2.

Final

Sep 6: Mauritius 2 Reunion 1.

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

September 17

Bayern Munich (Ger) 2 (Makaay 73, 86)
Celtic (Sco) 1 (Thompson 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 48,000. **Ref:** De Santis (Ita)
Bayern: Kahn - Sagnol, Kovac, Linke, Lizarazu (Rau 73), Salihamidzic (Santa Cruz 73), Hargreaves, Ballack, Ze Roberto, Pizarro, Makaay.
Celtic: Hedman - Varga, Balde, McNamara, Agathe, Petrov, Lennon, Thompson, Sutton, Hartson (Miller 66), Larsson.

Lyon (Fra) 1 (Juninho pen 26)
Anderlecht (Blg) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 37,002. **Ref:** Gomes Costa (Por)
Lyon: Coupet - Deflandre, Edmilson, Muller, Reveillere, Essien, Dhorasoo, Diarra, Juninho (Carriere 70), Govou (Malouda 72), Elber (Luyindula 88).
Anderlecht: Zitka - Zewlakow, De Boeck, Tihinen, Deschacht, Wilhelmsson, Hasi (Mornar 64), Zetterberg, Baseggio, Seol, Dindane.

September 30

Anderlecht 1 (Mornar 53)
Bayern Munich 1 (Santa Cruz 74)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 21,788. **Ref:** Medina Cantalejo (Spa)
Anderlecht: Zitka - Zewlakow, Kompany, Tihinen, Deschacht, Hendrikx (Kolar 83), Hasi, Baseggio, Seol, Mornar (Zetterberg 87), Aruna.
Bayern: Kahn - Kuffour (Salihamidzic 74), Kovac, Linke, Lizarazu, Hargreaves (Schweinsteiger 63), Demichelis, Ballack, Ze Roberto (Santa Cruz 63), Pizarro, Makaay. *Sent off: Pizarro 36min.*

Celtic 2 (Miller 70, Sutton 78)
Lyon 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 58,027. **Ref:** Iturralde Gonzalez (Spa)
Celtic: Hedman - Varga, Balde, McNamara, Agathe, Petrov, Lennon, Thompson, Sutton, Hartson (Miller 64), Larsson.
Lyon: Coupet - Deflandre, Edmilson, Muller, Reveillere, Dhorasoo (Luyindula 74), Diarra, Govou (Malouda 79), Carriere (Essien 63), Juninho, Elber.

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Celtic	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Lyon	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Anderlecht	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

Oct 21
Anderlecht v Celtic
Lyon v Bayern Munich
Nov 5
Bayern Munich v Lyon
Celtic v Anderlecht

Nov 25
Anderlecht v Lyon
Celtic v Bayern Munich
Dec 10
Bayern Munich v Anderlecht
Lyon v Celtic

Group B

September 17

Arsenal (Eng) 0
Internazionale (Ita) 3 (Cruz 22, Van der Meyde 24, Martins 41)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 34,393. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)
Arsenal: Lehmann - Lauren, Toure, Campbell, Cole, Ljungberg, Gilberto Silva (Kanu 64), Vieira, Pires (Bergkamp 64), Wiltord, Henry (Parlour 79).
Inter: Toldo - J Zanetti, Cannavaro, Materazzi, Cordoba, Van der Meyde (Helveg 70), C Zanetti, Emre (Lamouchi 66), Kily Gonzalez, Martins, Cruz (Kallon 84).

Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr) 2 (Diogo Rincon 83, 90)
Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 78,000. **Ref:** Frojdfeldt (Swe)
Dynamo: Shovkovskyi - Dmytrulin (Khatskevich 46), Gavrancic, Fedorov, Nesmachnyi, Gusev (Diogo Rincon 62), Ghioane (Cernat 79), Leko, Bialkevich, Peev, Shatskikh.
Lokomotiv: Ovchinnikov - Sennikov, Ignashevich, Nizhegorodov, Lekgetho, Pachinin, Maminov, Izmailov (Leandro 87), Loskov, Khokhlov, Ashvetia (Pimenov 88).

September 30

Internazionale 2 (Adani 23, Vieri 90)
Kyiv Dynamo 1 (Fedorov 34)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 24,326. **Ref:** Bre (Fra)
Inter: Toldo - J Zanetti, Adani, Cannavaro, Cordoba, Van der Meyde (Helveg 61), C Zanetti, Emre, Kily Gonzalez, Cruz (Kallon 77), Martins (Vieri 58).
Dynamo: Shovkovskyi - Dmytrulin (Khatskevich 68), Peev, Fedorov, Sablic, Nesmachnyi, Ghioane, Diogo Rincon, Leko, Bialkevich, Shatskikh (Melaschenko 85).

Lokomotiv Moscow 0
Arsenal 0
Att: 27,000. **Ref:** Wegereef (Hol)
Lokomotiv: Ovchinnikov - Sennikov, Ignashevich, Pachinin, Evseev (Nizhegorodov 73), Maminov, Khokhlov, Loskov, Gurenko, Ashvetia (Pimenov 66), Izmailov.
Arsenal: Lehmann - Lauren, Keown, Toure, Cole, Parlour, Gilberto Silva, Edu, Pires, Wiltord, Henry.

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Internazionale	2	2	0	0	5	1	6
Kyiv Dynamo	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Lokomotiv M	2	0	1	1	0	2	1
Arsenal	2	0	1	1	0	3	1

Oct 21
Kyiv Dynamo v Arsenal
Lokomotiv Moscow v Internazionale
Nov 5
Arsenal v Kyiv Dynamo
Internazionale v Lokomotiv Moscow
Nov 25
Internazionale v Arsenal
Lokomotiv Moscow v Kyiv Dynamo
Dec 10
Arsenal v Lokomotiv Moscow
Kyiv Dynamo v Internazionale

Group C

September 17

AEK Athens (Gre) 1 (Tsartas 86)
Deportivo La Coruna (Spa) 1 (Pandiani 12)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 16,600. **Ref:** McCurry (Sco)
AEK: Chiotis - Kreek (Nalitzis 80), Borbokis, Georgeas, Kostenoglou, Zagorakis, Katsouranis, Kapsis (Moras 20), Tsartas, Limberopoulos (Ivic 65), Okkas.
Deportivo: Molina - Hector, Naybet, Jorge Andrade, Romero, Mauro Silva, Sergio (Duscher 65), Victor, Luque (Diego Tristan 70), Valeron, Pandiani (Scaloni 77).

PSV Eindhoven (Hol) 1 (Bouma 65)
Monaco (Fra) 2 (Morientes 31, Cisse 56)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Bennett (Eng)
PSV: Waterreus - Colin, Ooijer, Bouma, Lee, Rommedahl, Van Bommel, Van der Schaaf (Vennegoor of Hesselink 46), Robben (De Jong 83), Park, Kezman.
Monaco: Roma - Givet, Squillaci, Rodriguez, Evra, Cisse (Plasil 73), Bernardi, Zikos, Rothen (Prso 89), Giuly (Adebayor 86), Morientes.

September 30

Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Sergio 19, Pandiani 50)
PSV Eindhoven 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Deportivo: Molina - Manuel Pablo, Naybet, Jorge Andrade, Capdevila, Mauro Silva, Sergio, Victor, Valeron (Munitis 80), Luque (Fran 46), Pandiani (Diego Tristan 58).
PSV: Waterreus - Ooijer, Bouma, Hofland, Lee, Van Bommel, Van der Schaaf (Robben 54), Vogel (Vennegoor of Hesselink 78), Park, Rommedahl, Kezman.

Monaco 4 (Giuly 23, Morientes 27, 56, Prso 86)
AEK Athens 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
Monaco: Roma - Givet, Squillaci, Rodriguez, Evra, Giuly, Zikos, Bernardi, Rothen (Plasil 85), Morientes (Prso 76), Adebayor (Cisse 69).
AEK: Chiotis - Georgeas, Moras (Tsartas 62), Amponsah, Kreek (Kostenoglou 15), Okkas, Katsouranis, Zagorakis (Kasapis 75), Maladenis, Georgatos, Limberopoulos.

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaco	2	2	0	0	6	1	6
Dep La Coruna	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
AEK Athens	2	0	1	1	1	5	1
PSV Eindhoven	2	0	0	2	1	4	0

Oct 21
AEK Athens v PSV Eindhoven
Deportivo La Coruna v Monaco
Nov 5
Monaco v Deportivo La Coruna
PSV Eindhoven v AEK Athens
Nov 25
Deportivo La Coruna v AEK Athens
Monaco v PSV Eindhoven
Dec 10
AEK Athens v Monaco
PSV Eindhoven v Deportivo La Coruna

Group D

September 17

Juventus (Ita) 2 (Del Piero 5, 73)
Galatasaray (Tur) 1 (Hakan Sukur 17)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 14,420. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)
Juventus: Buffon - Thuram, Ferrara, Montero, Zambrotta, Tacchinardi (Davids 46), Appiah, Camoranesi (Tudor 63), Nedved, Del Piero, Trezeguet (Di Vaio 78).
Galatasaray: Mondragon - Cesar Prates, De Boer, Bulent, Hakan Unsal (Tamas 82), Fabio Pinto (Arif 80), Sabri, Joao Batista, Ergun, Hasan Sas (Cihan 64), Hakan Sukur.

Real Sociedad (Spa) 1 (Kovacevic pen 79)
Olympiakos (Gre) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Fisker (Den)
Sociedad: Westerveld - Rekarte, Jauregi, Schurrer, Aranzabal, Karpin, Xabi Alonso, Aranburu, Barkero (Lee 61), De Paula (Nihat 61), Kovacevic.
Olympiakos: Katergiannakis - Mavrogenidis (Pantos 74), Kostoulas, Karembeu, Anatolakis, Georgiadis, Stoltidis, Kafes (Gonias 81), Venetidis, Giovanni (Choutos 64), Djordjevic.

September 30

Galatasaray 1 (Hakan Sukur 61)
Real Sociedad 2 (Kovacevic 3, Xabi Alonso 72)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Fandel (Ger)
Galatasaray: Mondragon - Tamas (Arif 46), Bulent, De Boer, Ergun, Ayhan, Cihan (Baljic 84), Cesar Prates (Joao Batista 40), Sabri, Hasan Sas, Hakan Sukur. *Sent off: Hasan Sas 82min.*
Sociedad: Westerveld - Potillon, Kvarme, Jauregi, Aranzabal, Karpin, Xabi Alonso, Aranburu, Gabilondo (Lee 67), Nihat (Alkiza 65), Kovacevic (De Paula 78).

Olympiakos 1 (Stoltidis 11)
Juventus 2 (Nedved 21, 79)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Poulat (Fra)
Olympiakos: Katergiannakis - Pantos, Kostoulas, Antzas, Venetidis, Mavrogenidis (Gonias 66), Karembeu, Stoltidis, Djordjevic, Castillo (Tatsis 75), Giovanni (Georgiadis 66).
Juventus: Buffon - Thuram, Legrottaglie, Montero, Zambrotta, Appiah, Tacchinardi, Davids, Nedved (Birindelli 89), Trezeguet, Di Vaio (Miccoli 56).

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	2	2	0	0	4	2	6
Real Sociedad	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Galatasaray	2	0	0	2	2	4	0
Olympiakos	2	0	0	2	1	3	0

Oct 21
Galatasaray v Olympiakos
Juventus v Real Sociedad
Nov 5
Olympiakos v Galatasaray
Real Sociedad v Juventus
Nov 25
Galatasaray v Juventus
Olympiakos v Real Sociedad
Dec 10
Juventus v Olympiakos
Real Sociedad v Galatasaray

Group E

September 16

Manchester United (Eng) 5 (Silvestre 13, Fortune 15, Solskjaer 33, Butt 40, Djemba Djemba 83)
Panathinaikos (Gre) 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 66,520. **Ref:** Sars (Fra)
Man Utd: Howard - G Neville, Ferdinand, Silvestre, O'Shea (Fletcher 58), Solskjaer (Beilion 44), P Neville, Butt (Djemba Djemba 58), Fortune, Giggs, Van Nistelrooy.
Panathinaikos: Nikopolidis (Chalkias 46) - Seitaridis, Kyrgiakos, Henriksen, Fissas, Goumas (Epalle 46), Papadopoulos (Olisadebe 62), Maric, Zutautas, Sanmartean, Constantinou.

Rangers (Sco) 2 (Nerlinger 74, Lovenkrands 79)
Stuttgart (Ger) 1 (Kuranyi 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 47,957. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)
Rangers: Klos - Berg, Khizanishvili, Ball, Ricksen (Ross 34), Nerlinger, Emerson (Capucho 66), Vanoli (Lovenkrands 46), Arteta, Mols, Arveladze.
Stuttgart: Hildebrand - Hinkel, Fernando Meira, Bordon, Gerber (Szabics 71), Tiffert, Soldo, Heldt (Meissner 70), Hleb, Kuranyi, Cacau (Amanatidis 46).

October 1

Panathinaikos 1 (Konstantinidis 87)
Rangers 1 (Emerson 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 13,718. **Ref:** Dauden Ibanez (Spa)
Panathinaikos: Chalkias - Seitaridis, Morris, Kyrgiakos (Goumas 46), Fissas, Michaelsen, Epalle (Konstantinidis 79), Zutautas, Maric, Constantinou, Vlaovic (Papadopoulos 64). *Sent off: Goumas 57min.*
Rangers: Klos - Khizanishvili, Moore, Berg, Ball, Capucho, Emerson, Arteta, Lovenkrands (Vanoli 77), Arveladze (Nerlinger 85), Mols.

Stuttgart 2 (Szabics 50, Kuranyi 52)
Manchester United 1 (Van Nistelrooy pen 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,348. **Ref:** Bolognino (Ita)
Stuttgart: Hildebrand - Hinkel, Fernando Meira, Bordon, Lahm (Gerber 69), Soldo, Heldt, Vranjes (Tiffert 70), Hleb (Meissner 86), Szabics, Kuranyi.
Man Utd: Howard - G Neville, Ferdinand (Forlan 80), Silvestre, O'Shea (Fortune 62), Scholes, Keane, P Neville, Cristiano Ronaldo (Fletcher 90), Giggs, Van Nistelrooy.

GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Stuttgart	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Manchester Utd	2	1	0	1	6	2	3
Panathinaikos	2	0	1	1	1	6	1

Oct 22
Rangers v Manchester United
Stuttgart v Panathinaikos
Nov 4
Manchester United v Rangers
Panathinaikos v Stuttgart
Nov 26
Panathinaikos v Manchester United
Stuttgart v Rangers
Dec 9
Manchester United v Stuttgart
Rangers v Panathinaikos

Group F

September 16

Partizan Belgrade (Ser) 1 (Delibasic 54)
FC Porto (Por) 1 (Costinha 22)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 33,000. **Ref:** Benes (Cze)
Partizan: Radakovic - Cirkovic (Savic 46), Djordjevic, West, Rzasa, Duljaj, Nadj, Stojanoski (Drulovic 46), Ilic, Delibasic, Iliev (Brnovic 84).
Porto: Vitor Baia - Paulo Ferreira, Jorge Costa, Ricardo Carvalho, Nuno Valente, Pedro Mendes, Costinha, Deco (Ricardo Fernandes 89), Maniche (Bosingwa 79), Derlei, McCarthy (Jankauskas 70).

Real Madrid (Spa) 4 (Roberto Carlos 29, Ronaldo 34, 57, Figo pen 61)
Marseille (Fra) 2 (Drogba 26, Van Buyten 83)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 73,000. **Ref:** Starck (Ger)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Michel Salgado, Pavon, Raul Bravo, Roberto Carlos, Figo, Beckham, Cambiasso (Guti 73), Zidane (Solari 86), Raul, Ronaldo (Portillo 86).
Marseille: Runje - Beye, Van Buyten, Hemdani (Vachousek 62), Meite, Ecker, Marlet (Johanssen 38), Celestini, Meriem, Drogba (N'Diaye 66), Hossam.

October 1

Marseille 3 (Drogba 62, 68, 85)
Partizan Belgrade 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 53,000. **Ref:** Messina (Ita)
Marseille: Runje - Perez, Van Buyten, Meite, Ecker, Marlet (Fernandao 61), Vachousek, Meriem (Hemdani 73), Celestini, Hossam (Sychev 76), Drogba.
Partizan: Radakovic - Cirkovic (Savic 85), Djordjevic, Stojanoski, West, Malbasa, Duljaj, Nadj, Delibasic, Ilic (Drulovic 81), Iliev (Brnovic 81). *Sent off: Delibasic 45min.*

FC Porto 1 (Costinha 7)
Real Madrid 3 (Ivan Helguera 27, Solari 37, Zidane 67)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 65,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)
Porto: Vitor Baia - Paulo Ferreira, Pedro Emanuel (Jankauskas 70), Ricardo Carvalho, Nuno Valente, Maniche, Costinha, Pedro Mendes (McCarthy 46), Ricardo Fernandes (Bosingwa 46), Deco, Derlei.
Real Madrid: Casillas - Michel Salgado, Pavon, Raul Bravo, Roberto Carlos, Ivan Helguera, Guti, Figo, Zidane, Solari (Cambiasso 90), Ronaldo (Raul 83).

GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	2	2	0	0	7	3	6
Marseille	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
FC Porto	2	0	1	1	2	4	1
Partizan Belgrade	2	0	1	1	1	4	1

Oct 22
Marseille v FC Porto
Real Madrid v Partizan Belgrade
Nov 4
Partizan Belgrade v Real Madrid
FC Porto v Marseille
Nov 26
Marseille v Real Madrid
FC Porto v Partizan Belgrade
Dec 9
Partizan Belgrade v Marseille
Real Madrid v FC Porto

Group G

September 16

Besiktas (Tur) 0
Lazio (Ita) 2 (Stam 37, Fiore 78)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
Besiktas: Cordoba - Zago, Ronaldo, Ahmet, Kaan Dobra, Tayfur, Giunti (Sinan 72), Ibrahim, Tumer (Hassan 56), Pancu, Ilhan (Sergen 56).
Lazio: Peruzzi - Oddo, Stam, Fernando Couto, Favalli, Sergio Conceicao (Giannichedda 60), Albertini, Stankovic, Fiore, Corradi (Liverani 83), Claudio Lopez (Muzzi 69).

Sparta Prague (Cze) 0
Chelsea (Eng) 1 (Gallas 85)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,597. **Ref:** Fleischer (Ger)

Sparta: Blazek - Petras (Sionko 46), Johana, Labant (Jezek 87), Hubschman, Poborsky, Nemec, Kovac, Michalik (Zboncak 57), Gluscevic, Jun.
Chelsea: Cudicini - Johnson, Desailly, Gallas, Bridge, Makelele, Geremi, Veron, Petit (Lampard 46), Crespo (Hasselbaink 72), Mutu (Duff 46).

October 1

Lazio 2 (Inzaghi 46, pen 60)
Sparta Prague 2 (Sionko 27, Poborsky 38)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 25,405. **Ref:** Colombo (Fra)
Lazio: Peruzzi - Oddo, Stam, Mihajlovic, Favalli, Sergio Conceicao (Muzzi 61), Albertini (Liverani 46), Stankovic, Fiore, Corradi, Inzaghi (Dabo 82).
Sparta: Blazek - Flachbart, Hubschman, Johana, Labant, Sionko (Michalik 87), Kovac, Pergl, Poborsky, Zelenka (Krmas 90), Kincl (Gluscevic 82).

Chelsea 0
Besiktas 2 (Sergen 25, 29)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 32,957. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)
Chelsea: Cudicini - Terry, Desailly, Gallas, Makelele, Geremi, Lampard, Veron, Babayaro (Bridge 23), Mutu (Hasselbaink 46), Crespo (Duff 46).
Besiktas: Cordoba - Emre, Ronaldo, Zago, Okan (Kaan Dobra 60), Tayfur, Giunti (Yasin 67), Ibrahim, Pancu, Sergen (Hassan 82), Ilhan. *Sent off: Ilhan 50min.*

GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lazio	2	1	1	0	4	2	4
Besiktas	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
Chelsea	2	1	0	1	1	2	3
Sparta Prague	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

Oct 22
Chelsea v Lazio
Sparta Prague v Besiktas
Nov 4
Besiktas v Sparta Prague
Lazio v Chelsea
Nov 26
Chelsea v Sparta Prague
Lazio v Besiktas
Dec 9
Besiktas v Chelsea
Sparta Prague v Lazio

Group H

September 16

Club Brugge (Blg) 1 (Juanfran og 84)
Celta Vigo (Spa) 1 (Juanfran 50)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Kasnaferis (Gre)
Brugge: Butina - De Cock, Clement, Maertens (Gvozdenovic 70), Van der Heyden, Verheyen, Stoica (Englebert 31), Simons, Ceh (Saeternes 79), Martens, Mendoza. *Sent off: Mendoza 45min, Martens 90min.*
Celta: Pinto - Angel (Velasco 79), Sergio, Berizzo, Contreras, Juanfran, Vagner, Jose Ignacio, Jesuli (Silvinho 83), Lopez (Jandro 65), Milosevic.

Milan (Ita) 1 (Inzaghi 67)
Ajax (Hol) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)
Milan: Dida - Cafu, Nesta, Maldini, Costacurta (Laursen 33), Kaka, Gattuso, Pirlo, Seedorf (Serginho 64), Shevchenko, Inzaghi (Ambrosini 75). *Sent off: Gattuso 90min.*
Ajax: Lobont - Yakubu, Pasanen, Escude (Soetaers 70), Trabelsi, Pienaar (Sikora 80), Galasek, Maxwell, Van der Vaart, Sonck (Sneijder 55), Ibrahimovic.

October 1

Ajax 2 (Sonck 11, 53)
Club Brugge 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 49,371. **Ref:** Barber (Eng)
Ajax: Lobont - Trabelsi, Pasanen, Escude, Maxwell, Pienaar (De Jong 60), Galasek, Van der Vaart (Van Damme 77), Sonck, Soetaers (Sneijder 46), Ibrahimovic.
Brugge: Butina - De Cock, Clement, Rozehnal, Van der Heyden, Cornelis, Simons, Englebert (Ceh 54), Gvozdenovic (Simic 79), Verheyen, Saeternes.

Celta Vigo 0
Milan 0
Att: 30,000. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)
Celta: Pinto - Velasco, Contreras (Sergio 45), Caceres, Juanfran, Angel, Vagner, Giovanella, Lopez (Milosevic 58), Jesuli (Jandro 84), Mostovoi.
Milan: Dida - Cafu, Nesta, Maldini, Costacurta, Kaka (Rivaldo 63), Pirlo, Ambrosini, Rui Costa, Serginho (Inzaghi 62), Shevchenko (Brocchi 73).

GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	2	1	1	0	1	0	4
Ajax	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
Celta Vigo	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Club Brugge	2	0	1	1	1	3	1

Oct 22
Ajax v Celta Vigo
Milan v Club Brugge
Nov 4
Celta Vigo v Ajax
Club Brugge v Milan
Nov 26
Ajax v Milan
Celta Vigo v Club Brugge
Dec 9
Club Brugge v Ajax
Milan v Celta Vigo

UEFA CUP

1st rnd, 1st legs

September 24

AIK Stockholm (Swe) 0
Valencia (Spa) 1 (Oliveira 64)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Albrecht (Ger)

APOEL Nicosia (Cyp) 1 (Papandreon 46)
Mallorca (Spa) 2 (Toni Gonzalez 22, Bruggink 54)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Halsey (Eng)

Austria Wien (Aut) 1 (Janocko 39)
Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 2 (Addo 38, Ricken 67)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Dougal (Sco)

Auxerre (Fra) 1 (Kalou 6)
Neuchatel Xamax (Swi) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Genov (Bul)

Brondby (Den) 1 (Jonson 64)
Viktoria Zizkov (Cze) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Orrason (Ice)

Cementarnica (Mac) 0
Lens (Fra) 1 (Diop 90)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Rogalla (Swi)

CSKA Sofia (Bul) 1 (Dimitrov 18)
Torpedo Moscow (Rus) 1 (Semshov 78)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Hyytia (Fin)

Dinamo Bucharest (Rom) 2 (Niculescu 87, Zicu 88)
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Brugger (Aut)
Sent off: Srna (Shakhtar) 52min; Semeghin (Dinamo) 75min

Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) 3 (Da Silva 37, Agic 47, Sedloski pen 55)
MTK (Hun) 1 (Torghelle 2)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Gumienny (Blg)
Sent off: Drpic (Dinamo) 86min

Dundee (Sco) 1 (Wilkie 64)
Perugia (Ita) 2 (Di Loreto 51, Fusani 84)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Siric (Cro)

Ferencvaros (Hun) 1 (Kriston 37)
FC Copenhagen (Den) 1 (Jonsson 1)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Jara (Cze)

Gaziantepspor (Tur) 1 (Hasan Ozer 86)
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Granat (Pol)

Genclerbirligi (Tur) 3 (Skoko 41, Youla 42, 59)
Blackburn Rovers (Eng) 1 (Emerton 56)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Bertini (Ita)

Grasshopper (Swi) 1 (Eduardo 40)
Hajduk Split (Cro) 1 (Neretljak 56)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kelly (Ire)
Sent off: Andric (Hajduk) 77min

Hapoel Ramat-Gan (Isr) 0
Levski Sofia (Bul) 1 (Dimitrov 80)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Sammut (Mlt)
Played in Dunajska Streda, Slovakia

Hearts (Sco) 2 (De Vries 28, Webster 59)
Zeljeznicar (Bos) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Van Hulten (Hol)

Hertha Berlin (Ger) 0
Groclin Grodzisk (Pol) 0
Ref: Carmona Mendez (Spa)

Kaiserslautern (Ger) 1 (Klose 57)
Teplice (Cze) 2 (Rezek 5, Bencik 64)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Styles (Eng)

La Louviere (Blg) 1 (Odemwingie 15)
Benfica (Por) 1 (Simao 53)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Baskakov (Rus)

Maccabi Haifa (Isr) 2 (Badir 8, Katan 84)
Publikum (Sln) 1 (Kvas 90)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Shebek (Ukr)
Played in Izmir, Turkey

Malatyaspor (Tur) 0
Basle (Swi) 2 (M Yakin 15, Tum 76)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Salomir (Rom)

Manchester City (Eng) 3 (Sibierski 7, Fowler 77, Anelka pen 80)
Lokeren (Blg) 2 (Zoundi 13, Kristinsson 39)
HT: 1-2. **Ref:** Gilewski (Pol)

Matador Puchov (Slk) 1 (Jambor 90)
Barcelona (Spa) 1 (Kluivert 49)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Muftuoglu (Tur)

Metalurh Donetsk (Ukr) 1 (Shyshchenko 44)
Parma (Ita) 1 (Adriano 67)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Poulsen (Den)

Moscow Spartak (Rus) 2 (Pavlenko 14, Kalinichenko 33)
Esbjerg (Den) 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Kari (Fin)

MyPa (Fin) 0
Sochaux (Fra) 1 (Diawara 45)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Weiner (Ger)
Sent off: Korhonen (MyPa) 90min

Newcastle United (Eng) 5 (Bellamy 31, 37, Bramble 59, Shearer 77, Ambrose 89)
NAC Breda (Hol) 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)

OB Odense (Den) 2 (Miti 17, Borre 90)
Red Star Belgrade (Ser) 2 (Zigic 22, 64)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Lajuks (Lat)

Olimpija Ljubljana (Sln) 1 (Zlogar 66)
Liverpool (Eng) 1 (Owen 78)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Rodriguez Santiago (Spa)

Panionios (Gre) 2 (Smiljanic 29, Majewski 32)
Nordsjaelland (Den) 1 (Ziberi 67)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Vidlak (Cze)

PAOK Salonika (Gre) 0
Lyn Oslo (Nor) 1 (Sigurdsson 39)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Hanacsek (Hun)

Roma (Ita) 4 (Dellas 13, De Rossi 21, Carew 54, Delvecchio 90)
Vardar Skopje (Mac) 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Meyer (Ger)

Salzburg (Aut) 0
Udinese (Ita) 1 (Passaro 36)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Bozinovski (Mac)

Sartid (Ser) 1 (Kocic 90)
Slavia Prague (Cze) 2 (T Dosek 44, Bejbl pen 45)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Megia Davila (Spa)
Sent off: Paunovic (Sartid) 19min

Southampton (Eng) 1 (Phillips 52)
Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 1 (Raducanu 20)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Skjerven (Nor)

Sporting Lisbon (Por) 2 (Lourenco 15, Liedson 85)
Malmo (Swe) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Rosetti (Ita)

Uniao Leiria (Por) 1 (Caico 56)
Molde (Nor) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Tudor (Rom)

Utrecht (Hol) 2 (Van der Haar 44, Tanghe 85)
MSK Zilina (Slk) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Zammit (Mlt)

Valerenga (Nor) 0
Grazer AK (Aut) 0
Ref: Malzinskas (Lit)

Varteks (Cro) 1 (Kastel 45)
Debrecen (Hun) 3 (Sandor 24, Kiss 57, Dombi 88)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Malcolm (NI)
Sent off: Kristic (Varteks) 85min

Ventspils (Lat) 1 (Rimkus pen 81)
Rosenborg (Nor) 4 (F Johnsen 23, Stensaas 32, Storflor 39, Brattbakk 68)
HT: 0-3. **Ref:** McKeon (Ire)

Villarreal (Spa) 0
Trabzonspor (Tur) 0
Ref: Duhamel (Fra)

Zimbru Chisinau (Mol) 1 (Balasa 57)
Aris Thessaloniki (Gre) 1 (Malous 25)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Kovacic (Cro)

September 25

Bordeaux (Fra) 2 (Riera 7, Darcheville 36)
Artmedia Petrzalka (Slk) 1 (Krejci 16)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** Kessler (Ger)

Feyenoord (Hol) 2 (Kuijt 63, Buffel 76)
Karnten (Aut) 1 (Maric 56)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Clark (Sco)

Hamburg (Ger) 2 (Hoogma pen 49, Romeo 81)
Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk (Ukr) 1 (Venhlynskyi 10)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Ingvarsson (Swe)

Kamen Ingrad (Cro) 0
Schalke (Ger) 0
Ref: Rodomonti (Ita)

Wisla Krakow (Pol) 2 (Frankowski 29, 56)
NEC Nijmegen (Hol) 1 (De Nooijer pen 65)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Paniashvili (Geo)

AUSTRIA

Sep 13: Admira 0 Bregenz 1; Pasching 1 Mattersburg 1; Salzburg 5 Karnten 0; Sturm Graz 0 Austria Wien 0.
Sep 14: Rapid Wien 2 Grazer AK 1.
Sep 17: Bregenz 1 Rapid Wien 2; Admira 4 Pasching 0; Grazer AK 1 Austria Wien 3.
Sep 20: Austria Wien 1 Sturm Graz 1; Bregenz 2 Admira 2; Karnten 1 Salzburg 2; Mattersburg 4 Pasching 2.
Sep 21: Grazer AK 2 Rapid Wien 0.
Sep 27: Admira 1 Grazer AK 1; Salzburg 0 Bregenz 1; Sturm Graz 0 Mattersburg 1.
Sep 28: Austria Wien 3 Karnten 0; Pasching 1 Rapid Wien 2.
Oct 1: Karnten 2 Admira 0; Sturm Graz 2 Grazer AK 1.
Oct 3: Bregenz 4 Austria Wien 2.
Oct 4: Grazer AK 1 Pasching 1; Mattersburg 1 Admira 1; Rapid Wien 1 Salzburg 0.
Oct 5: Karnten 0 Sturm Graz 3.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid Wien	12	9	2	1	24	13	29
Austria Wien	12	6	4	2	22	11	22
Bregenz	12	6	2	4	20	19	20
Grazer AK	12	5	3	4	19	17	18
Mattersburg	12	4	5	3	16	17	17
Admira	12	3	4	5	16	13	13
Sturm Graz	12	3	3	6	14	16	12
Pasching	12	3	3	6	16	23	12
Karnten	12	2	5	5	9	22	11
Salzburg	12	3	1	8	14	19	10

BELGIUM

Friday, September 12

Heusden-Zolder 0
St Truiden 1 (Janssen 4) Att: 3,500

Saturday, September 13

Charleroi 0
Royal Antwerp 1 (Pivaljevic 35) Att: 5,200

Club Brugge 1 (Clement 40)
Gent 1 (Mrdakovic 87) Att: 24,168

Germinal Beerschot 0
La Louviere 0 Att: 6,500

Lokeren 0
Anderlecht 6 (Seol 18, Katana og 35, Doba og 51, Mornar 72, Hendrikx 83, Dindane 85) Att: 7,000

Westerlo 3 (Dosunmu 62, Paas 64, 81)
Beveren 2 (Kaiper 30, 39) Att: 4,500

Sunday, September 14

Mons 1 (Ban 70)
Lierse 3 (Imschoot 14, Thompson 40, De Wilde 87) Att: 4,800

Mouscron 4 (Zewlakow 14, Dugardein 42, Gregoire 54, Pieroni 85)
Cercle Brugge 0 Att: 6,500

Standard 0
Genk 2 (Daerden 7, Janssen 90) Att: 22,000

Saturday, September 20

Anderlecht 5 (Mornar 15, Hendrikx 21, Dindane 22, Wilhelmsson 49, Zewlakow 85)
Westerlo 1 (Dosunmu 62) Att: 23,705

Beveren 2 (Sanogo 39, 88)
Heusden-Zolder 0 Att: 3,500

Cercle Brugge 2 (Jbari 36, Arijs 87)
Standard 0 Att: 5,250

Genk 0
Mons 0 Att: 23,127

Gent 1 (De Brul 85)
Charleroi 1 (Macquet 58) Att: 7,400

La Louviere 1 (Ishiaku 48)
Mouscron 2 (Mpenza 17, Pieroni 62) Att: 4,000

Sunday, September 21

Lierse 2 (Wils 48, Mitu 85)
Lokeren 1 (Doba 67) Att: 6,500

Royal Antwerp 0
Germinal Beerschot 4 (Camara 15, Victor 32, 37, Cooreman 56) Att: 13,000

St Truiden 3 (Buvens 9, Janssen 74, Boffin 84)
Club Brugge 2 (Mendoza 43, Verheyen 59) Att: 9,500

Friday, September 26

Germinal Beerschot 0
Gent 2 (Machethe 42, Van Dooren og 53) Att: 6,500

Heusden-Zolder 2 (De Camargo 55, Suzuki 65)
Anderlecht 4 (Zetterberg 45, 79, 88, Mornar 81) Att: 6,500

Saturday, September 27

Charleroi 1 (Traore 4)
St Truiden 1 (Janssen 50) Att: 7,200

Club Brugge 3 (Verheyen 52, Mendoza 84, Demets og 90)
Beveren 0 Att: 22,370

Lierse 3 (De Wilde 4, Schaessens pen 39, Thompson 44)
Genk 5 (Beslija 12, Roussel 68, 80, Ingrao 81, Zokora 86) Att: 8,500

Mons 0
Cercle Brugge 0 Att: 3,000

Mouscron 2 (Mpenza 44, Zewlakow 45)
Royal Antwerp 0 Att: 6,524

Standard 0
La Louviere 2 (Odemwingie 21, Van den Bossche 90) Att: 10,000

Sunday, September 28

Lokeren 1 (De Beule 61)
Westerlo 3 (Paas 19, Janssens 25, 48) Att: 5,000

Saturday, October 4

Beveren 1 (Yapi Yapo pen 89)
Charleroi 0 Att: 4,500

Genk 3 (Thijs 35, Janssen 79, Roussel 87)
Lokeren 1 (Gretarsson 85) Att: 23,316

Gent 0
Mouscron 0 Att: 8,600

La Louviere 1 (Tilmant 47)
Mons 1 (Kenmogne 76) Att: 5,950

Westerlo 2 (Janssens 33, Paas 67)
Heusden-Zolder 0 Att: 4,000

Sunday, October 5

Anderlecht 1 (Dindane 30)
Club Brugge 1 (Mendoza 81) Att: 26,311

Cercle Brugge 0
Lierse 0 Att: 4,250

Royal Antwerp 0
Standard 4 (Mpenza 15, Kaklamanos 45, Aliyu 89, 90) Att: 5,000

St Truiden 0
Germinal Beerschot 0 Att: 7,500

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anderlecht	8	7	1	0	26	6	22
Genk	8	5	2	1	16	7	17
Club Brugge	8	4	3	1	17	8	15
Mouscron	8	3	4	1	14	9	13
Gent	8	3	4	1	13	9	13
Standard	8	4	1	3	12	8	13
St Truiden	8	3	4	1	9	7	13
Lierse	8	3	3	2	10	9	12
Westerlo	8	3	3	2	12	12	12
La Louviere	8	2	5	1	9	6	11
Germinal B	8	2	4	2	7	5	10
Cercle Brugge	8	2	4	2	3	6	10
Beveren	8	3	0	5	10	16	9
Royal Antwerp	8	2	1	5	4	18	7
Mons	8	0	5	3	6	13	5
Charleroi	8	0	4	4	2	7	4
Heusden-Zolder	8	0	2	6	2	13	2
Lokeren	8	0	2	6	5	18	2

LEADING GOALSCORER
8 Andres Mendoza (Club Brugge)

BULGARIA

Sep 12: Spartak Varna 0 Slavia 1.
Sep 13: Makedonska 1 Lovech 2; Marek 0 CSKA 3; Botev 0 Naftex 3; Chernomorets 0 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 1; Vidima-Rakovski 3 Cherno More 0; Lokomotiv Sofia 5 Belasitsa 2; Levski 3 Rodopa 0.
Sep 19: Lovech 0 Rodopa 0; Belasitsa 0 Levski 1.
Sep 20: Cherno More 2 Lokomotiv Sofia 2; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 2 Vidima-Rakovski 0; Slavia 5 Botev 0; Makedonska 4 Marek 0; CSKA 2 Spartak Varna 0.
Sep 21: Naftex 1 Chernomorets 1.
Sep 26: Lokomotiv Sofia 0 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 0.
Sep 27: Spartak Varna 2 Makedonska 0; Chernomorets 2 Slavia 5; Vidima-Rakovski 1 Naftex 1; Rodopa 2 Belasitsa 0.
Sep 28: Marek 1 Lovech 2; Botev 3 CSKA 1; Levski 0 Cherno More 0.
Oct 3: Lovech 1 Belasitsa 0; Cherno More 1 Rodopa 0; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 3 Levski 1; Naftex 1 Lokomotiv Sofia 2; Slavia 2 Vidima-Rakovski 0; CSKA 3 Chernomorets 0; Makedonska 4 Botev 3; Marek 1 Spartak Varna 2.

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lok Plovdiv	8	7	1	0	20	5	22
CSKA	8	6	1	1	20	8	19
Slavia	8	6	0	2	19	10	18
Levski	8	4	3	1	10	5	15
Lovech	8	4	3	1	10	6	15
Naftex	8	3	2	3	14	10	11
Lok Sofia	8	2	4	2	15	14	10
Rodopa	8	3	1	4	9	9	10
Spartak Varna	8	3	1	4	11	12	10
Cherno More	8	2	4	2	12	15	10
Vidima-Rakovski	8	2	3	3	12	14	9
Makedonska	8	3	0	5	13	18	9
Marek	8	2	0	6	10	19	6
Botev	8	2	0	6	12	23	6
Chernomorets	8	1	2	5	8	17	5
Belasitsa	8	1	1	6	7	17	4

CROATIA

Sep 13: Osijek 1 Zadar 2; Hajduk 5 Marsonia 0; Zagreb 0 Dinamo 2; Kamen Ingrad 3 Varteks 0; Inker 1 Cibalia 0; Slaven 1 Rijeka 1.
Sep 20: Zadar 4 Cibalia 1; Dinamo 1 Kamen Ingrad 1; Marsonia 3 Zagreb 0; Varteks 2 Inker 0; Rijeka 1 Hajduk 2; Osijek 0 Slaven 1.
Sep 27: Slaven 4 Zadar 0; Zagreb 1 Rijeka 1; Inker 1 Dinamo 1; Cibalia 2 Varteks 0.
Sep 28: Hajduk 2 Osijek 0; Kamen Ingrad 5 Marsonia 0.
Oct 4: Zadar 2 Varteks 2; Dinamo 3 Cibalia 2; Marsonia 0 Inker 1; Rijeka 1 Kamen Ingrad 2; Osijek 5 Zagreb 2; Slaven 1 Hajduk 1.

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	10	7	3	0	24	6	24
Hajduk	10	7	1	2	19	9	22
Inker	10	4	3	3	13	11	15
Kamen Ingrad	10	4	2	4	17	12	14
Slaven	10	3	4	3	9	7	13
Varteks	10	3	3	4	10	13	12
Osijek	10	4	0	6	16	20	12
Zadar	10	3	3	4	16	22	12
Rijeka	10	2	5	3	12	11	11
Cibalia	10	3	2	5	12	16	11
Zagreb	10	2	3	5	10	18	9
Marsonia	10	2	3	5	9	22	9

CZECH REPUBLIC

Sep 13: Opava 2 Zlin 0; Ceske Budejovice 2 Olomouc 1; Synot 1 Pribram 0; Liberec 2 Sparta 0; Chmel Blsany 2 Teplice 2; Plzen 1 Brno 1.
Sep 14: Zizkov 0 Jablonec 0.
Sep 15: Slavia 1 Ostrava 2.
Sep 20: Pribram 1 Slavia 0; Zlin 3 Chmel Blsany 1; Teplice 2 Liberec 1; Olomouc 3 Zizkov 0; Opava 1 Ceske Budejovice 0; Jablonec 1 Plzen 1.
Sep 21: Sparta 3 Synot 1.
Sep 22: Brno 0 Ostrava 0.
Sep 27: Ceske Budejovice 3 Jablonec 0; Synot 3 Opava 1; Liberec 1 Olomouc 1; Chmel Blsany 0 Sparta 4; Plzen 0 Pribram 4; Ostrava 3 Zlin 0.
Sep 28: Zizkov 0 Teplice 1.
Sep 29: Slavia 4 Brno 1.
Oct 3: Zlin 3 Brno 2.
Oct 4: Teplice 0 Slavia 1; Pribram 2 Liberec 0; Olomouc 3 Chmel Blsany 0; Opava 1 Zizkov 1; Ceske Budejovice 2 Synot 2; Jablonec 1 Ostrava 1.
Oct 6: Sparta 3 Plzen 1.

CZECH REPUBLIC

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ostrava	10	7	3	0	21	7	24
Sparta	10	5	4	1	19	6	19
Teplice	10	5	4	1	14	8	19
Olomouc	10	5	3	2	18	8	18
Slavia	10	5	2	3	13	6	17
Brno	10	4	4	2	14	11	16
Pribram	10	4	2	4	14	9	14
Liberec	10	3	5	2	9	7	14
Zlin	10	4	2	4	11	12	14
Ceske Budejovice	10	3	2	5	11	15	11
Opava	10	3	2	5	9	18	11
Synot	10	2	4	4	11	15	10
Jablonec	10	1	6	3	5	12	9
Plzen	10	2	3	5	10	20	9
Zizkov	10	2	2	6	7	14	8
Chmel Blsany	10	0	2	8	7	25	2

DENMARK

Sep 13: FC Copenhagen 0 Midtjylland 1.
Sep 14: AaB 1 Nordsjaelland 0; OB 2 Esbjerg 0; Frem 2 Viborg 3; AGF 2 Herfolge 1; AB 0 Brondby 3.
Sep 17: Brondby 1 AaB 1; Esbjerg 2 Frem 0; Herfolge 2 OB 2; Midtjylland 1 Nordsjaelland 1; Viborg 2 FC Copenhagen 2; AGF 2 AB 0.
Sep 20: Nordsjaelland 1 Esbjerg 1; FC Copenhagen 0 Herfolge 0; OB 0 Brondby 1.
Sep 21: AaB 1 Midtjylland 0; AB 1 Viborg 4; Frem 1 AGF 4.
Sep 28: AaB 2 AGF 1; Brondby 1 Midtjylland 3; Esbjerg 2 Herfolge 0; OB 2 AB 1; FC Copenhagen 2 Frem 0; Nordsjaelland 2 Viborg 1.
Oct 4: AB 0 FC Copenhagen 1.
Oct 5: Herfolge 2 Nordsjaelland 1; Midtjylland 4 Frem 1; Viborg 2 AaB 3; AGF 0 OB 5; Brondby 3 Esbjerg 0.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brondby	11	7	2	2	18	7	23
FC Copenhagen	11	6	3	2	17	9	21
Esbjerg	11	6	3	2	18	12	21
OB	11	6	2	3	22	12	20
Midtjylland	11	6	2	3	19	13	20
AaB	11	5	2	4	12	12	17
Viborg	11	3	4	4	20	20	13
AGF	11	4	1	6	16	23	13
Herfolge	11	3	2	6	9	14	11
Nordsjaelland	11	2	4	5	12	15	10
Frem	11	3	0	8	10	22	9
AB	11	2	1	8	9	23	7

ENGLAND

Saturday, September 13

Arsenal 1 (Henry pen 40)
Portsmouth 1 (Sheringham 26) Att: 38,052

Blackburn 1 (Jansen 8)
Liverpool 3 (Owen pen 12, 68, Kewell 90) Att: 30,074

Bolton 2 (Davies 23, N'Gotty 81)
Middlesbrough 0 Att: 26,419

Charlton 0
Manchester Utd 2 (Van Nistelrooy 62, 81) Att: 26,078

Chelsea 4 (Lampard 35, Mutu 37, 75, Hasselbaink 90)
Tottenham 2 (Kanoute 25, 87) Att: 41,165

Everton 2 (Radzinski 67, Ferguson pen 88)
Newcastle 2 (Shearer pen 59, pen 82) Att: 40,228

Southampton 2 (Beattie pen 37, 52)
Wolverhampton 0 Att: 31,711

Sunday, September 14

Birmingham 2 (Forssell 45, 82)
Fulham 2 (Saha 1, Boa Morte 78) Att: 27,250

Manchester City 4 (Anelka pen 48, pen 68, 83, Tarnat 50)
Aston Villa 1 (Angel 31) Att: 46,687

Monday, September 15

Leicester 4 (Nalis 20, Dickov 24, 83, Scowcroft 90)
Leeds 0 Att: 30,460

Saturday, September 20

Aston Villa 2 (Alpay 37, Samuel 55)
Charlton 1 (Lisbie 86) Att: 31,410

Fulham 2 (Malbranque 73, Saha 79)
Manchester City 2 (Anelka 46, Wanchope 90) Att: 16,124

Leeds 0
Birmingham 2 (Savage pen 79, Forssell 84) Att: 34,305

Liverpool 2 (Owen pen 20, Heskey 75)
Leicester 1 (Bent 90) Att: 44,094

Newcastle 0
Bolton 0 Att: 52,014

Portsmouth 1 (De Zeeuw 57)
Blackburn 2 (Neill 35, Cole 43) Att: 20,024

Tottenham 1 (Kanoute 62)
Southampton 3 (Beattie 3, 43, Phillips 60) Att: 35,784

Wolverhampton 0
Chelsea 5 (Lampard 17, Hasselbaink 36, Duff 52, Crespo 67, 90) Att: 29,208

Sunday, September 21

Manchester Utd 0
Arsenal 0 Att: 67,539

Middlesbrough 1 (Job 6)
Everton 0 Att: 28,113

Friday, September 26

Arsenal 3 (Henry 18, pen 80, Gilberto Silva 67)
Newcastle 2 (Robert 26, Bernard 71) Att: 38,112

Saturday, September 27

Birmingham 2 (Clemence 21, Lazaridis 50)
Portsmouth 0 Att: 29,057

Bolton 1 (Davies 85)
Wolverhampton 1 (Rae 30) Att: 27,043

Chelsea 1 (Hasselbaink 43)
Aston Villa 0 Att: 41,182

Leicester 1 (Sinclair 73)
Manchester Utd 4 (Keane 15, Van Nistelrooy 16, 45, 52) Att: 32,044

Southampton 0
Middlesbrough 1 (Christie 13) Att: 30,772

Sunday, September 28

Blackburn 0
Fulham 2 (Boa Morte 5, Saha 56) Att: 21,985

Charlton 3 (Lisbie 31, 43, 83)
Liverpool 2 (Smicer 15, Owen pen 52) Att: 26,508

Everton 4 (Watson 27, 37, 52, Ferguson 39)
Leeds 0 Att: 39,151

Manchester City 0
Tottenham 0 Att: 46,482

Saturday, October 4

Fulham 2 (Boa Morte 36, 73)
Leicester 0 Att: 14,562

Leeds 2 (Johnson 11, 27)
Blackburn 1 (Baggio 86) Att: 35,039

Liverpool 1 (Kewell 14)
Arsenal 2 (Hyypia og 31, Pires 68) Att: 44,374

Manchester Utd 3 (Van Nistelrooy pen 36, Scholes 57, Giggs 82)
Birmingham 0 Att: 67,633

Newcastle 1 (Shearer 44)
Southampton 0 Att: 52,127

Portsmouth 1 (Sheringham 34)
Charlton 2 (Fortune 77, Bartlett 90) Att: 20,106

Tottenham 3 (Kanoute 43, Poyet 46, Keane 49)
Everton 0 Att: 36,137

Wolverhampton 1 (Cameron 75)
Manchester City 0 Att: 29,386

Sunday, October 5

Aston Villa 1 (Angel 58)
Bolton 1 (Nolan 46) Att: 30,229

Middlesbrough 1 (Nemeth 46)
Chelsea 2 (Gudjohnsen 17, Crespo 88) Att: 29,170

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	8	6	2	0	16	6	20
Man Utd	8	6	1	1	16	3	19
Chelsea	7	6	1	0	18	7	19
Fulham	7	4	2	1	15	9	14
Birmingham	7	4	2	1	8	5	14
Man City	8	3	3	2	14	9	12
Southampton	8	3	3	2	8	5	12
Liverpool	8	3	2	3	12	9	11
Charlton	8	3	2	3	12	12	11
Portsmouth	8	2	3	3	10	9	9
Blackburn	8	2	2	4	15	16	8
Everton	8	2	2	4	12	14	8
Aston Villa	8	2	2	4	8	12	8
Tottenham	8	2	2	4	8	12	8
Bolton	8	1	5	2	6	12	8
Leeds	8	2	2	4	8	17	8
Middlesbrough	8	2	1	5	7	14	7
Newcastle	7	1	3	3	8	10	6
Leicester	8	1	2	5	10	15	5
Wolverhampton	8	1	2	5	3	18	5

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Ruud Van Nistelrooy (Manchester Utd)
7 Michael Owen (Liverpool)

FRANCE

Saturday, September 13

Bastia 4 (Diarra 16, Ben Saada 37, Nee 51, 87)
Guingamp 2 (Gousse 46, Le Roux pen 67) Att: 5,960

Bordeaux 1 (Darcheville pen 21)
Sochaux 3 (Frau 25, pen 79, Isabey 77) Att: 22,208

Lille 1 (Manchev 74)
Monaco 1 (Giuly 45) Att: 16,000

Lyon 1 (Elber 43)
Auxerre 1 (Cisse 29) Att: 38,321

Marseille 5 (Drogba 14, Marlet 24, Hossam 55, 86, Sychev 69)
Le Mans 0 Att: 55,000

Metz 2 (Borbiconi 5, Thiaw 89)
Montpellier 1 (Bamogo 62) Att: 16,928

Nice 1 (Cherrad 11)
Nantes 0 Att: 12,373

Rennes 2 (Sorlin 23, N'Guema 77)
Lens 0 Att: 15,115

Strasbourg 3 (Ljuboja pen 5, Niang 22, 27)
Ajaccio 2 (Bagayoko 19, Ouadah 33) Att: 13,344

Sunday, September 14

Paris SG 2 (Dieuze og 43, Heinze 68)
Toulouse 1 (Dieuze 59) Att: 30,361

Saturday, September 20

Ajaccio 1 (Mitrovic 44)
Rennes 0 Att: 6,000

Auxerre 4 (Cisse 24, 61, Lachuer 35, Mexes 45)
Bastia 1 (Diarra 27) Att: 8,000

Guingamp 0
Paris SG 2 (Fiorese 66, Pauleta pen 72) Att: 14,797

Lens 1 (Thomert 26)
Bordeaux 0 Att: 35,435

Nice 2 (Cherrad 33, 42)
Lille 0 Att: 12,000

Sochaux 3 (Isabey 10, Santos 25, Pagis 90)
Strasbourg 0 Att: 16,729

Toulouse 1 (Avezac 72)
Metz 0 Att: 13,610

Sunday, September 21

Le Mans 0
Lyon 2 (Elber 12, 89) Att: 13,478

Montpellier 1 (Laigle 26)
Monaco 2 (Adebayor 18, Giuly 73) Att: 13,870

Nantes 1 (Vahirua 3)
Marseille 0 Att: 35,500

Saturday, September 27

Bastia 2 (Hadji 7, Flachez og 21)
Sochaux 0 Att: 5,844

Lille 1 (Manchev 26)
Montpellier 1 (Carotti 89) Att: 13,197

Lyon 4 (Juninho 9, 41, 57, Reveillere 24)
Lens 0 Att: 33,695

Marseille 2 (Drogba 59, pen 90)
Nice 1 (Laslandes 36) Att: 54,380

Metz 1 (Gueye 90)
Guingamp 1 (Le Roux 45) Att: 15,703

Monaco 3 (Adebayor 11, Cisse 29, Prso 49)
Toulouse 0 Att: 6,903

Paris SG 1 (Pauleta 9)
Auxerre 0 Att: 39,777

Rennes 2 (Piquionne 35, Jeunechamp 90)
Le Mans 0 Att: 15,245

Sunday, September 28

Bordeaux 1 (Darcheville 79)
Ajaccio 0 Att: 19,545

Strasbourg 1 (Camadini 90)
Nantes 0 Att: 28,000

Saturday, October 4

Ajaccio 2 (Diomede 45, Mitrovic 90)
Lyon 4 (Luyindula 15, 71, 88, Malouda 67) Att: 3,268

Auxerre 3 (Cisse 43, 45, 64)
Lille 0 Att: 9,836

Guingamp 1 (Gousse 53)
Monaco 2 (Giuly 17, 27) Att: 13,206

Le Mans 0
Bordeaux 0 Att: 13,627

Lens 0
Metz 2 (Maoulida 56, 90) Att: 36,083

Nantes 1 (Hadjadj 22)
Rennes 0 Att: 32,465

Nice 0
Strasbourg 0 Att: 12,527

Sochaux 0
Paris SG 1 (Pauleta 20) Att: 19,561

Toulouse 2 (Emana 12, Faure pen 75)
Montpellier 2 (Bamogo pen 42, 58) Att: 13,970

Sunday, October 5

Marseille 3 (Drogba 15, Marlet 20, Skacel 68)
Bastia 1 (Nee 49) Att: 53,000

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monaco	9	7	1	1	18	8	22
Marseille	9	7	0	2	16	5	21
Lyon	9	5	2	2	16	7	17
Nantes	9	5	1	3	9	5	16
Paris SG	9	5	1	3	11	9	16
Nice	9	4	3	2	10	7	15
Strasbourg	9	4	2	3	12	10	14
Auxerre	9	4	1	4	14	11	13
Sochaux	9	4	1	4	11	10	13
Bastia	9	4	1	4	11	13	13
Lens	9	4	1	4	5	11	13
Rennes	9	3	3	3	8	6	12
Lille	9	3	3	3	9	10	12
Metz	9	3	2	4	8	7	11
Bordeaux	9	3	2	4	7	8	11
Ajaccio	9	3	1	5	10	14	10
Montpellier	9	2	3	4	10	13	9
Toulouse	9	1	3	5	5	14	6
Guingamp	9	1	2	6	7	15	5
Le Mans	9	0	3	6	1	15	3

LEADING GOALSCORER
7 Djibril Cisse (Auxerre)

GERMANY

Saturday, September 13

Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Juan 28)
Hamburg 0 Att: 22,500

Borussia Dortmund 2 (Ewerthon 17, Ismael og 69)
Werder Bremen 1 (Lisztes 41) Att: 80,500

Hansa Rostock 0
Bochum 2 (Hashemian 47, B Gudjonsson 90) Att: 18,000

Hertha 2 (Bobic 14, 21)
Hannover 3 (Simak 25, Kleber 69, De Guzman 80) Att: 37,197

1860 Munich 2 (Kioyo 7, Agostino 83)
Koln 1 (Springer 62) Att: 22,000

Schalke 0
Stuttgart 0 Att: 61,027

Wolfsburg 3 (Fernando Baiano 11, 84, Klimowicz 89)
Bayern Munich 2 (Schweinsteiger 49, Makaay 60) Att: 30,000

Sunday, September 14

Kaiserslautern 2 (Hristov 32, 38)
Freiburg 2 (Coulibaly 21, Zeyer 35) Att: 35,560

Monchengladbach 0
Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Kreuz 17, Burger 90) Att: 33,900

Saturday, September 20

Bayern Munich 3 (Makaay 25, Santa Cruz 65, Ballack 69)
Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Ramelow 10, Franca 34, Basturk 81) Att: 63,000

Bochum 2 (Zdebel 45, Hashemian 72)
Hertha 2 (Neuendorf 6, 66) Att: 21,999

Freiburg 2 (Bajramovic 3, Tskitishivili pen 39)
Schalke 1 (Rodriguez 12) Att: 25,000

Hannover 2 (Christiansen 18, Idrissou 83)
Monchengladbach 0 Att: 22,417

Koln 2 (Scherz 35, Voronin 60)
Wolfsburg 3 (Biliskov 3, Petrov 26, Klimowicz 72) Att: 33,000

Stuttgart 1 (Kuranyi 67)
Borussia Dortmund 0 Att: 48,000

Werder Bremen 2 (Ailton pen 48, Micoud 66)
1860 Munich 1 (Schroth 57) Att: 31,233

Sunday, September 21

Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Beierle 90)
Kaiserslautern 3 (Hristov 6, 52, Klose 48) Att: 23,000

Hamburg 2 (Romeo 69, Reinhardt 85)
Hansa Rostock 1 (Max 10) Att: 43,000

Saturday, September 27

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Ewerthon 68)
Freiburg 0 Att: 78,000

Hansa Rostock 1 (Linke og 47)
Bayern Munich 2 (Santa Cruz 30, Makaay 86) Att: 29,000

Kaiserslautern 1 (Klose 90)
Hannover 0 Att: 32,361

Koln 1 (Scherz 79)
Werder Bremen 4 (Micoud 10, Klasnic 40, Stalteri 70, Haristeas 90) Att: 33,000

Monchengladbach 2 (Van Lent pen 5, 90)
Bochum 2 (Diabang 60, Madsen 89) Att: 29,000

1860 Munich 0
Stuttgart 3 (Soldo 12, Fernando Meira pen 17, Hleb 50) Att: 38,000

Wolfsburg 0
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Schneider 57) Att: 24,135

Sunday, September 28

Hertha 1 (Friedrich 32)
Hamburg 1 (Schlicke 90) Att: 36,876

Schalke 1 (Rodriguez 33)
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Chris 37) Att: 61,266

Saturday, October 4

Bayern Munich 4 (Makaay 22, Ballack 45, Schweinsteiger 58, Salihamidzic 88)
Hertha 1 (Kovac 65) Att: 63,000

Bochum 4 (Hashemian 49, 83, Madsen 60, 90)
Kaiserslautern 0 Att: 20,120

Eintracht Frankfurt 0
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Reina 10) Att: 25,000

Freiburg 1 (Bajramovic 77)
1860 Munich 0 Att: 25,000

Hamburg 2 (Barbarez 58, 73)
Monchengladbach 1 (Van Lent 18) Att: 51,325

Hannover 1 (Christiansen 16)
Schalke 2 (Asamoah 26, Rodriguez 41) Att: 20,584

Stuttgart 0
Koln 0 Att: 52,000

Sunday, October 5

Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Placente 70, Berbatov 75, Bierofka 79)
Hansa Rostock 0 Att: 22,500

Werder Bremen 5 (Ailton 2, 21, Stalteri 41, Micoud 57, Klasnic 58)
Wolfsburg 3 (Biliskov 40, Streit 54, Karhan 65) Att: 33,000

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Werder Bremen	8	6	1	1	21	9	19
B Leverkusen	8	6	1	1	18	6	19
Stuttgart	8	5	3	0	9	0	18
Bayern Munich	8	5	2	1	21	12	17
B Dortmund	8	5	1	2	13	6	16
Bochum	8	3	3	2	14	10	12
Freiburg	8	3	3	2	12	11	12
Wolfsburg	8	4	0	4	17	18	12
Hannover	8	3	2	3	15	15	11
Schalke	8	2	4	2	10	12	10
1860 Munich	8	3	1	4	7	11	10
Hamburg	8	2	2	4	7	15	8
Kaiserslautern*	8	3	1	4	8	12	7
Hansa Rostock	8	1	2	5	10	16	5
Eintracht F'furt	8	1	2	5	6	13	5
Hertha	8	0	5	3	6	13	5
M'gladbach	8	1	2	5	6	14	5
Koln	8	1	1	6	7	14	4

**3pts deducted for failing to supply accurate information when re-applying for professional licence*

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 Ailton (Werder Bremen)
7 Martin Max (Hansa Rostock)

GREECE

Sep 13: Iraklis 2 AEK 2; Proodeftiki 1 Olympiakos 0; Panathinaikos 3 Kallithea 1.
Sep 14: Paniliakos 0 Aris 0; Akratitos 1 PAOK 2; Panionios 1 OFI 1; Halkidona 2 Xanthi 0; Aigaleo 2 Ionikos 0.
Sep 20: Kallithea 2 Panionios 2; Aris 3 Xanthi 2.
Sep 21: Ionikos 0 Iraklis 1; PAOK 0 Proodeftiki 0; Olympiakos 1 Paniliakos 0; Akratitos 0 Aigaleo 2; OFI 3 Halkidona 1; AEK 2 Panathinaikos 2.
Sep 27: Panathinaikos 2 Ionikos 0; Panionios 2 AEK 2; Xanthi 1 Olympiakos 3.
Sep 28: Aigaleo 2 Iraklis 0; Proodeftiki 1 Akratitos 1; Paniliakos 1 PAOK 4; Halkidona 1 Kallithea 1; Aris 1 OFI 2.
Oct 4: Ionikos 0 Panionios 2; PAOK 1 Xanthi 1.
Oct 5: Proodeftiki 0 Aigaleo 1; Iraklis 0 Panathinaikos 1; Akratitos 2 Paniliakos 2; Olympiakos 4 OFI 1; Kallithea 4 Aris 0; AEK 1 Halkidona 2.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panathinaikos	6	5	1	0	12	4	16
Olympiakos	6	5	0	1	17	3	15
Aigaleo	6	4	0	2	7	3	12
PAOK	6	3	2	1	9	5	11
Panionios	6	2	4	0	10	7	10
AEK	6	2	3	1	11	8	9
Iraklis	6	2	2	2	8	6	8
Halkidona	6	2	2	2	8	9	8
Aris	6	2	1	3	7	9	7
OFI	6	2	1	3	8	14	7
Kallithea	6	1	3	2	11	10	6
Proodeftiki	6	1	3	2	3	6	6
Paniliakos	6	1	2	3	8	11	5
Akratitos	6	1	2	3	5	14	5
Ionikos	6	1	0	5	3	12	3
Xanthi	6	0	2	4	4	10	2

HOLLAND

Friday, September 12

Den Haag 1 (Bodde 20)
Volendam 1 (Tuyp 10) Att: 6,335

Saturday, September 13

Ajax 4 (Maxwell 21, Ibrahimovic 27, Galasek pen 47, Sonck 62)
RKC 1 (Boulahrouz 64) Att: 48,121

Heerenveen 1 (Hansson 38)
Groningen 0 Att: 14,500

PSV 2 (Kezman 16, Van Bommel 72)
Utrecht 1 (Fujita 90) Att: 32,500

RBC 1 (Hesp 56)
Vitesse 1 (Amoah 30) Att: 5,000

Zwolle 0
Roda JC 0 Att: 6,000

Sunday, September 14

AZ 2 (Van Galen 14, El Khattabi 43)
Feyenoord 2 (Kuijt pen 8, 80) Att: 8,310

NAC 1 (Seedorf 90)
Willem II 1 (Landzaat 7) Att: 14,500

NEC 2 (De Freitas 47, De Nooijer 49)
Twente 1 (John 16) Att: 12,250

Friday, September 19

Volendam 2 (Buys pen 34, pen 61)
NEC 3 (Schuurman 13, Hersi 21, Ax 71) Att: 4,631

Saturday, September 20

AZ 3 (El Khattabi 12, Van Galen pen 45, Perez 57)
Heerenveen 1 (Knopper 43) Att: 7,636

Den Haag 1 (Hofstede 48)
RBC 2 (Youssouf 32, Molenaar 75) Att: 6,120

Twente 2 (Sinouh og 2, Christensen 83)
RKC 1 (Boutahar 48) Att: 12,500

Vitesse 1 (Mbamba 27)
Roda JC 1 (Kone 41) Att: 16,000

Willem II 2 (Shoukov 42, Mathijsen 90)
Zwolle 1 (Hristov 78) Att: 12,500

Sunday, September 21

Feyenoord 1 (Buffel 20)
PSV 3 (Kezman 7, 55, Vennegoor of Hesselink 74) Att: 41,000

Groningen 1 (Salmon 22)
Utrecht 1 (Tanghe 3) Att: 11,740

NAC 4 (Boukhari 8, Elmander 46, 57, Seedorf 90)
Ajax 2 (Sikora 69, Ibrahimovic 73) Att: 16,000

Saturday, September 27

Heerenveen 3 (Knopper 9, Sibon 15, 60)
Twente 0 Att: 14,500

PSV 0
AZ 1 (Nelisse 73) Att: 32,000

RBC 1 (Youssouf 64)
Volendam 1 (Tuyp 40) Att: 4,800

Sunday, September 28

Ajax 6 (Sonck 13, Ibrahimovic 29, Sneijder 49, Sikora 57, Soetaers 68, Pienaar 81)
Willem II 0 Att: 47,728

NEC 1 (De Nooijer 38)
Den Haag 2 (Van der Gun 53, Stroeve 78) Att: 12,500

RKC 2 (Greene 4, Redan 85)
NAC 0 Att: 6,200

Roda JC 0
Groningen 0 Att: 12,000

Utrecht 1 (Tanghe 37)
Vitesse 3 (Hofs 13, Zongo 81, Claessens 86) Att: 16,000

Zwolle 0
Feyenoord 3 (Ono 53, 71, Lurling 69) Att: 6,600

Friday, October 3

Vitesse 3 (Dingsdag 35, Cornelisse 37, Van Beukering 83)
Twente 5 (Frankel og 1, John 10, 40, Ramzi 59, N'Kufo 75) Att: 18,437

Saturday, October 4

AZ 2 (Wijker 2, El Khattabi pen 90)
NEC 0 Att: 7,280

Den Haag 0
PSV 4 (Bouma 2, De Jong 54, Rommedahl 65, Robben 82) Att: 8,344

Heerenveen 1 (Knopper 45)
RKC 0 Att: 14,300

NAC 1 (Elmander 45)
Utrecht 2 (De Groot 78, Koning og 82) Att: 12,864

Willem II 0
Roda JC 2 (Sonko 35, Kone 88) Att: 12,300

Sunday, October 5

Feyenoord 2 (Van Persie 14, Lurling 89)
RBC 0 Att: 41,000

Groningen 1 (Smit 20)
Ajax 3 (Ibrahimovic 26, Sonck 82, Mitea 89) Att: 12,500

Volendam 2 (Tuyp 27, Bridji 72)
Zwolle 2 (Takak 30, Hristov 44) Att: 4,810

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ajax	7	6	0	1	19	7	18
PSV	7	5	1	1	19	6	16
AZ	7	5	1	1	13	5	16
Heerenveen	7	5	0	2	8	5	15
Feyenoord	7	4	1	2	12	8	13
RKC	7	4	0	3	11	7	12
Roda JC	7	2	4	1	8	6	10
Willem II	7	3	1	3	7	16	10
NEC	7	3	0	4	9	12	9
Twente	7	3	0	4	11	15	9
RBC	7	2	2	3	7	9	8
Utrecht	7	2	2	3	7	9	8
Groningen	7	2	2	3	5	8	8
NAC	7	2	1	4	9	10	7
Volendam	7	1	3	3	9	11	6
Vitesse	7	1	2	4	10	14	5
Den Haag	7	1	2	4	5	12	5
Zwolle	7	0	2	5	3	12	2

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Mateja Kezman (PSV)
5 Iwan Redan (RKC)
4 Ali El Khattabi (AZ)
4 Zlatan Ibrahimovic (Ajax)

HUNGARY

Sep 12: Siofok 2 Bekescsaba 0.
Sep 13: Videoton 2 Debrecen 0; Haladas 1 MTK 1; Gyor 0 Ujpest 0; Pecs 1 Zalaegerszeg 0.
Sep 14: Ferencvaros 2 Matav 0.
Sep 19: Debrecen 1 Pecs 0.
Sep 20: Bekescsaba 2 Videoton 2; Ujpest 0 Haladas 0; MTK 1 Siofok 0; Zalaegerszeg 1 Ferencvaros 2; Matav 1 Gyor 2.
Sep 27: Siofok 1 Ujpest 0.
Sep 28: Bekescsaba 1 Debrecen 2; Videoton 1 MTK 1; Haladas 0 Matav 0; Gyor 4 Zalaegerszeg 3; Ferencvaros 3 Pecs 0.
Oct 3: MTK 2 Bekescsaba 0.
Oct 4: Ujpest 1 Videoton 2; Pecs 1 Gyor 0; Zalaegerszeg 4 Haladas 0; Matav 2 Siofok 1.
Oct 5: Debrecen 5 Ferencvaros 0.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MTK	9	5	2	2	16	9	17
Debrecen	9	5	1	3	16	7	16
Videoton	9	4	4	1	14	11	16
Matav	9	4	2	3	13	10	14
Siofok	9	4	2	3	9	6	14
Pecs	9	4	2	3	10	10	14
Gyor	9	3	2	4	8	13	11
Ferencvaros*	9	4	4	1	13	11	10
Ujpest	9	2	4	3	9	9	10
Haladas	9	2	4	3	8	12	10
Bekescsaba	9	1	3	5	8	15	6
Zalaegerszeg	9	1	0	8	11	22	3

**6pts deducted because of a pitch invasion by Ferencvaros supporters during a game last season*

ITALY

Saturday, September 13

Milan 2 (Shevchenko 9, Inzaghi 85)
Bologna 1 (Nervo 32) Att: 57,835

Sampdoria 1 (Bazzani 73)
Lazio 2 (Inzaghi 8, Albertini pen 19) Att: 32,476

Sunday, September 14

Chievo 1 (D'Anna pen 21)
Juventus 2 (Legrottaglie 26, Trezeguet 49) Att: 34,624

Empoli 1 (Di Natale 40)
Reggina 1 (Mozart 27) Att: 4,613

Lecce 3 (Siviglia 33, Vucinic 79, Cassetti 84)
Ancona 1 (Ganz pen 69) Att: 13,780

Modena 0
Udinese 1 (Pizarro pen 83) Att: 14,964

Parma 3 (Bresciano 27, Adriano pen 50, Gilardino 83)
Perugia 0 Att: 17,483

Roma 5 (Montella 11, Chivu 16, Totti 23, 58, Carew pen 89)
Brescia 0 Att: 50,000

Siena 0
Inter 1 (Cufre og 29) Att: 12,517

Saturday, September 20

Ancona 1 (Bilica 61)
Modena 1 (Kamara 54) Att: 11,372

Siena 4 (Chiesa pen 25, pen 45, 61, Flo 67)
Empoli 0 Att: 10,595

Sunday, September 21

Bologna 2 (Guglielminpietro 62, Dalla Bona pen 90)
Udinese 0 Att: 19,734

Brescia 4 (Di Biagio 8, Filippini 52, Caracciolo 52, Petruzzi 85)
Reggina 4 (Nakamura pen 20, 72, Bonazzoli 36, Sottil 62) Att: 14,055

Inter 0
Sampdoria 0 Att: 44,813

Juventus 2 (Di Vaio 21, 35)
Roma 2 (Chivu 25, Zebina 87) Att: 57,665

Lazio 2 (Stam 30, Inzaghi 79)
Parma 3 (Bresciano 1, 88, Adriano 63) Att: 48,500

Lecce 1 (Chevanton 57)
Chievo 2 (Lanna 52, Cossato 68) Att: 8,859

Perugia 1 (Vryzas 31)
Milan 1 (Gattuso 18) Att: 25,818

Saturday, September 27

Reggina 0
Juventus 2 (Di Vaio 13, Nedved 49)

Udinese 0
Inter 0 Att: 25,000

Sunday, September 28

Chievo 4 (Zanchetta 39, pen 49, Semioli 62, Santana 81)
Perugia 1 (Di Loreto 46) Att: 10,031

Empoli 2 (Di Natale 74, Tavano 78)
Lazio 2 (Stankovic 38, Fiore 87) Att: 5,816

Milan 3 (Shevchenko 21, 68, Tomasson 89)
Lecce 0 Att: 53,645

Modena 2 (Amoruso 16, Kamara 40)
Bologna 0 Att: 13,387

Parma 1 (Adriano 79)
Siena 1 (Lazetic 38) Att: 15,408

Roma 3 (Montella 47, Totti 77, Delvecchio 84)
Ancona 0 Att: 62,150

Sampdoria 2 (Bazzani 85, Flachi pen 88)
Brescia 1 (Mauri 67) Att: 24,461

Sunday, October 5

Ancona 0
Udinese 3 (Fava 8, 47, Iaquinta 28) Att: 10,740

Empoli 0
Modena 3 (Cevoli 48, Ungari 62, Milanetto 75) Att: 5,162

Inter 1 (Martins 78)
Milan 3 (Inzaghi 39, Kaka 46, Shevchenko 77) Att: 75,831

Juventus 2 (Iuliano 23, Trezeguet pen 80)
Bologna 1 (Signori pen 25) Att: 31,493

Lazio 1 (Mihajlovic 64)
Chievo 0 Att: 46,160

Lecce 1 (Cassetti 31)
Brescia 4 (Caracciolo 6, 69, 84, Baggio 85) Att: 20,370

Parma 1 (Adriano 16)
Sampdoria 0 Att: 18,302

Perugia 0
Reggina 0 Att: 7,621

Siena 0
Roma 0 Att: 13,310

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	5	4	1	0	13	5	13
Milan	5	4	1	0	11	3	13
Roma	5	3	2	0	12	3	11
Parma	5	3	2	0	10	5	11
Lazio	5	3	1	1	11	7	10
Inter	5	2	2	1	4	3	8
Chievo	5	2	1	2	8	6	7
Modena	5	2	1	2	6	4	7
Udinese	5	2	1	2	5	4	7
Siena	5	1	3	1	7	4	6
Sampdoria	5	1	2	2	5	6	5
Brescia	5	1	2	2	10	13	5
Reggina	5	0	4	1	7	9	4
Bologna	5	1	1	3	6	8	4
Perugia	5	0	3	2	4	10	3
Lecce	5	1	0	4	6	14	3
Empoli	5	0	2	3	4	15	2
Ancona	5	0	1	4	2	12	1

LEADING GOALSCORERS
6 Adriano (Parma)
6 Andrii Shevchenko (Milan)
4 Marco Di Vaio (Juventus)
4 David Trezeguet (Juventus)

NORWAY

Sep 13: Rosenborg 3 Odd Grenland 1.
Sep 14: Valerenga 1 Bodo/Glimt 1; Tromso 1 Molde 0; Bryne 0 Stabaek 2; Viking 2 Lyn 2; Aalesund 3 Sogndal 0.
Sep 15: Brann 1 Lillestrom 3.
Sep 21: Stabaek 2 Tromso 2; Molde 1 Valerenga 0; Bodo/Glimt 3 Brann 0; Odd Grenland 3 Aalesund 0; Lyn 2 Bryne 0; Lillestrom 0 Rosenborg 6.
Sep 22: Sogndal 2 Viking 2.
Sep 27: Valerenga 2 Stabaek 2.
Sep 28: Aalesund 2 Lillestrom 1; Rosenborg 5 Bodo/Glimt 4; Brann 3 Molde 2; Tromso 2 Bryne 0; Sogndal 1 Lyn 2.
Sep 29: Viking 0 Odd Grenland 1.
Oct 4: Stabaek 6 Brann 0.
Oct 5: Bryne 3 Valerenga 4; Molde 0 Rosenborg 2; Bodo/Glimt 0 Aalesund 2; Lillestrom 1 Viking 0; Odd Grenland 3 Sogndal 3.
Oct 6: Lyn 5 Tromso 1.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	23	18	4	1	63	19	58
Bodo/Glimt	23	11	5	7	36	27	38
Odd Grenland	23	11	4	8	43	35	37
Stabaek	23	9	9	5	41	30	36
Sogndal	23	8	8	7	39	39	32
Viking	23	7	10	6	40	30	31
Lillestrom	23	8	7	8	26	33	31
Brann	23	7	7	9	38	46	28
Molde	23	8	3	12	27	36	27
Lyn	23	7	5	11	32	41	26
Tromso	23	7	5	11	29	48	26
Valerenga	23	5	10	8	26	29	25
Aalesund	23	6	6	11	26	39	24
Bryne	23	7	1	15	33	47	22

POLAND

Sep 12: Gornik P 0 Legia 0.
Sep 13: Odra 2 Swit 2; Widzew 2 Polonia 1; Lech 1 Groclin 3; Wisla K 3 Wisla P 1; Gornik Z 1 Amica 2.
Sep 14: Gornik L 4 Katowice 1.
Sep 19: Legia 4 Wisla K 1.
Sep 20: Groclin 4 Gornik P 1; Swit 0 Amica 1; Wisla P 2 Gornik Z 1; Katowice 1 Polonia 1; Odra 2 Gornik L 0.
Sep 21: Widzew 1 Lech 1.
Sep 26: Gornik Z 2 Legia 2.
Sep 27: Gornik L 1 Swit 0; Lech 1 Katowice 2; Gornik P 2 Widzew 3; Amica 3 Wisla P 2.
Sep 28: Wisla K 3 Groclin 2.
Oct 3: Legia 3 Amica 1.
Oct 4: Swit 1 Wisla P 2; Widzew 1 Wisla K 3; Katowice 1 Gornik P 0; Odra 2 Lech 0; Gornik L 2 Polonia 1.
Oct 5: Groclin 0 Gornik Z 0.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gornik L	8	6	1	1	12	5	19
Wisla K	8	6	0	2	18	10	18
Amica	8	6	0	2	12	7	18
Legia	8	4	4	0	13	6	16
Groclin	8	4	2	2	19	8	14
Katowice	8	4	2	2	9	11	14
Odra	7	3	2	2	8	9	11
Wisla P	8	3	1	4	12	15	10
Gornik Z	8	2	3	3	7	9	9
Widzew	8	2	2	4	10	13	8
Lech	8	1	1	6	9	14	4
Swit	8	0	4	4	5	12	4
Gornik P	8	1	1	6	4	14	4
Polonia	7	0	3	4	5	10	3

PORTUGAL

Friday, September 12

Sporting Braga 2 (Wender 43, Pena 50)
Gil Vicente 1 (Gaspar 5)

Saturday, September 13

Estrela Amadora 1 (Sabry 29)
Moreirense 2 (Manoel 2, Lito pen 84)

Guimaraes 1 (Manuel Jose 45)
Academica 2 (Dario 9, Tixier 66)

Pacos Ferreira 0
Maritimo 1 (Alan 62)

Uniao Leiria 1 (Maciel 60)
FC Porto 3 (Derlei 30, Ricardo Fernandes 72, Marco Ferreira 75)

Sunday, September 14

Benfica 3 (Joao Pereira 27, Feher 54, Luisao 87)
Belenenses 3 (Sane pen 82, 90, Leonardo 89)

Rio Ave 1 (Franco 16)
Beira Mar 1 (Marcelinho 40)

Sporting Lisbon 2 (Rochemback 21, Tonito 35)
Nacional 0

Monday, September 15

Alverca 1 (Gabriel 53)
Boavista 1 (Ricardo Sousa 71)

Friday, September 19

Maritimo 1 (Eric Gaucho pen 54)
Sporting Braga 1 (Wender 9)

Saturday, September 20

Boavista 0
Academica 0

Moreirense 1 (Manoel 90)
Sporting Lisbon 0

Sunday, September 21

Alverca 1 (Rodolfo Lima 82)
Rio Ave 0

Beira Mar 4 (Kata 5, 63, Wijnhard 16, 90)
Pacos Ferreira 1 (Ze Manuel 10)

Gil Vicente 5 (Gaspar 37, J Ferreira 50, Paulo Alves 54, 61, Luis Loureiro 90)
Estrela Amadora 1 (Rogerio 1)

Nacional 0
Uniao Leiria 2 (Joao Paulo 27, Laranjeiro 84)

FC Porto 2 (Derlei 10, Argel og 52)
Benfica 0

Monday, September 22

Belenenses 2 (Carlos Fernandes 29, Neca 69)
Guimaraes 0

Friday, September 26

Rio Ave 1 (Vandinho 57)
Boavista 2 (Fary 36, Eder 65)

Saturday, September 27

Guimaraes 1 (Romeu 5)
FC Porto 2 (Derlei 10, Costinha 79)

Sunday, September 28

Academica 0
Belenenses 1 (Antchouet 81)

Benfica 1 (Tiago 25)
Nacional 0

Estrela Amadora 1 (Miran 15)
Maritimo 0

Pacos Ferreira 0
Alverca 3 (Rodolfo Lima 65, Ramires 84, Vargas 86)

Sporting Braga 0
Beira Mar 2 (Kingsley 16, Juninho Petrolina 59)

Uniao Leiria 2 (Maciel 56, Bilro 90)
Moreirense 1 (Lima 4)

Monday, September 29

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Tello 90)
Gil Vicente 0

Friday, October 3

Boavista 1 (Ricardo Sousa 90)
Belenenses 1 (Antchouet 43)

Saturday, October 4

Maritimo 2 (Marcelo Carioca 63, Alan 90)
Sporting Lisbon 1 (Liedson 23)

Moreirense 1 (Manoel 69)
Benfica 4 (Simao 26, pen 55, Feher 45, Roger 90)

Sunday, October 5

Beira Mar 3 (Kingsley 2, Juninho Petrolina 28, Alcaraz 57)
Estrela Amadora 0

Gil Vicente 2 (Nuno Amaro 17, Casquilha 50)
Uniao Leiria 0

Nacional 4 (Adriano 55, 69, 89, Serginho 90)
Guimaraes 2 (Bessa 49, Joao Tomas 88)

FC Porto 4 (Cesar Peixoto 10, Derlei 15, 41, 49)
Academica 1 (Dario 7)

Rio Ave 2 (Franco 61, Van Es 86)
Pacos Ferreira 1 (Ze Manuel 47)

Monday, October 6

Alverca 1 (Amoreirinha 50)
Sporting Braga 2 (Pena 16, Barroso 79)

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Porto	7	6	1	0	18	5	19
Maritimo	7	5	1	1	7	3	16
Beira Mar	7	4	1	2	11	5	13
Boavista	7	3	4	0	7	3	13
Sporting Braga	7	4	1	2	8	7	13
Belenenses	7	3	3	1	14	9	12
Sporting Lisbon	7	4	0	3	11	10	12
Benfica	6	3	2	1	10	6	11
Gil Vicente	7	3	1	3	11	6	10
Alverca	7	3	1	3	7	5	10
Nacional	7	3	0	4	10	8	9
Moreirense	7	3	0	4	6	10	9
Academica	6	2	1	3	6	8	7
Uniao Leiria	7	2	1	4	6	10	7
Rio Ave	7	1	2	4	5	8	5
Estrela Amadora	7	1	1	5	4	19	4
Guimaraes	7	1	0	6	5	13	3
Pacos Ferreira	7	1	0	6	3	14	3

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Derlei (FC Porto)
5 Henri Antchouet (Belenenses)

ROMANIA

Sep 12: Farul 2 Gloria 2; National 2 Petrolul 1.
Sep 13: U Craiova 2 Brasov 2; Otelul 0 Dinamo 0; Oradea 1 Apulum 2; Arges 2 Ceahlaul 1.
Sep 14: Bacau 2 Rapid 1; Steaua 2 Poli AEK 0.
Sep 19: Apulum 0 Steaua 0; Dinamo 7 Bacau 3.
Sep 20: Poli AEK 0 National 0; Ceahlaul 2 Oradea 4; Gloria 3 Arges 2; Petrolul 0 Otelul 1.
Sep 21: Brasov 2 Farul 0; Rapid 3 U Craiova 1.
Sep 26: National 2 Apulum 3.
Sep 27: Brasov 3 Gloria 0; Farul 1 Rapid 1; Bacau 2 Petrolul 2; Otelul 4 Poli AEK 1; Oradea 2 Arges 1.
Sep 28: U Craiova 0 Dinamo 1; Steaua 2 Ceahlaul 0.
Oct 3: Petrolul 1 U Craiova 1.
Oct 4: Dinamo 3 Farul 2; Poli AEK 1 Bacau 1; Apulum 2 Otelul 1; Ceahlaul 1 National 4; Gloria 2 Oradea 1.
Oct 5: Arges 0 Steaua 0; Rapid 1 Brasov 0.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua	8	4	4	0	11	2	16
Dinamo	8	5	1	2	17	9	16
Rapid	8	4	3	1	12	6	15
Apulum	8	4	2	2	9	12	14
Gloria	8	4	1	3	12	12	13
Arges	8	3	2	3	13	10	11
Brasov	8	3	2	3	14	12	11
Otelul	8	3	2	3	9	8	11
National	8	3	1	4	12	15	10
Bacau	8	2	4	2	14	19	10
U Craiova	8	2	3	3	8	10	9
Oradea	8	2	2	4	10	11	8
Poli AEK	8	1	5	2	5	9	8
Ceahlaul	8	2	1	5	11	15	7
Petrolul	8	1	4	3	7	11	7
Farul	8	1	3	4	12	15	6

RUSSIA

Sep 13: Chernomorets 1 Torpedo-Metallurg 2; Rostov 2 Kryliya Sovetov 1; Saturn 2 Spartak-Alaniya 2; Moscow Spartak 1 Torpedo Moscow 0; Rubin 1 Shinnik 0; Rotor 1 Zenit 4; Dinamo 2 Uralan 0.
Sep 19: Zenit 2 Moscow Spartak 1.
Sep 20: CSKA 3 Chernomorets 2; Uralan 1 Rubin 1; Torpedo Moscow 1 Dinamo 1; Spartak-Alaniya 1 Rostov 0; Shinnik 2 Rotor 2.
Sep 21: Torpedo-Metallurg 1 Lokomotiv 3; Kryliya Sovetov 3 Saturn 1.
Sep 25: Lokomotiv 2 Spartak-Alaniya 0.
Sep 27: Chernomorets 1 Kryliya Sovetov 3; Rostov 0 CSKA 1; Saturn 0 Torpedo-Metallurg 3; Rubin 1 Zenit 2.
Sep 28: Rotor 2 Torpedo Moscow 0; Dinamo 1 Shinnik 2.
Sep 29: Moscow Spartak 1 Uralan 1.
Oct 4: CSKA 1 Dinamo 1; Zenit 3 Chernomorets 0; Torpedo-Metallurg 1 Rotor 0.
Oct 5: Kryliya Sovetov 0 Moscow Spartak 2; Shinnik 1 Saturn 0; Spartak-Alaniya 1 Rubin 0; Torpedo Moscow 1 Lokomotiv 0; Uralan 3 Rostov 1.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	27	16	7	4	51	29	55
Zenit	27	15	6	6	44	30	51
Lokomotiv	27	13	6	8	42	32	45
Dinamo	27	12	9	6	42	27	45
Rubin	27	12	8	7	36	25	44
Shinnik	27	11	11	5	37	25	44
Saturn	27	11	9	7	34	29	42
Kryliya Sovetov	27	10	9	8	36	29	39
Torpedo M	27	9	9	9	34	33	36
Moscow Spartak	27	10	5	12	38	43	35
Rostov	27	8	8	11	28	37	32
Spartak-Alaniya	27	8	3	16	19	41	27
Rotor	27	7	5	15	30	40	26
Uralan	27	5	10	12	21	39	25
Torpedo-Metallurg	27	6	5	16	21	37	23
Chernomorets	27	5	6	16	26	43	21

SCOTLAND

Saturday, September 13

Aberdeen 2 (Booth 6, Anderson 76)
Partick 1 (Mitchell 52) Att: 10,597

Dundee 0
Celtic 1 (Balde 8) Att: 10,647

Hibernian 0
Motherwell 2 (Clarkson 45, 75) Att: 8,367

Kilmarnock 0
Hearts 2 (De Vries 14, 41) Att: 6,925

Livingston 0
Dundee Utd 0 Att: 5,344

Rangers 4 (Thompson 7, Mols 32, Arveladze 43, Capucho 66)
Dunfermline 0 Att: 49,072

Saturday, September 20

Celtic 3 (Larsson 47, Sutton 64, Maloney 70)
Motherwell 0 Att: 58,013

Dundee 2 (Cowan 28, Novo 82)
Aberdeen 0 Att: 7,887

Dunfermline 0
Hibernian 0 Att: 9,715

Livingston 1 (Makel 18)
Kilmarnock 2 (Hessey 15, Boyd 22) Att: 6,150

Partick 0
Dundee Utd 2 (Miller 41, 63) Att: 4,711

Sunday, September 21

Hearts 0
Rangers 4 (Arveladze 45, 73, Lovenkrands 51, 89) Att: 12,000

Saturday, September 27

Aberdeen 0
Livingston 3 (Quino 45, Rubio 65, Pasquinelli 70) Att: 10,307

Dundee Utd 1 (McLaren 74)
Kilmarnock 1 (Boyd 72) Att: 6,529

Dunfermline 2 (Crawford 56, 70)
Partick 1 (Grady 50) Att: 4,684

Hibernian 1 (Doumbe 38)
Celtic 2 (Thompson pen 40, Larsson 51) Att: 12,032

Motherwell 1 (Adams 29)
Hearts 1 (Hartley 45) Att: 5,888

Rangers 3 (Arveladze 60, 89, Vanoli 86)
Dundee 1 (Novo 77) Att: 49,548

Saturday, October 4

Dundee Utd 0
Motherwell 2 (Adams pen 22, 90) Att: 6,194

Hearts 2 (Weir 73, Pressley 81)
Dundee 2 (Novo 16, Rae 64) Att: 11,348

Kilmarnock 1 (Nish 67)
Aberdeen 3 (Zdrilic 3, Tosh 15, Booth 47) Att: 6,023

Livingston 0
Dunfermline 0 Att: 4,616

Partick 0
Hibernian 1 (Brebner 90) Att: 4,125

Rangers 0
Celtic 1 (Khizanishvili og 46) Att: 49,825

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	8	7	1	0	19	3	22
Rangers	8	7	0	1	26	7	21
Hearts	8	4	2	2	11	8	14
Dunfermline	8	3	3	2	6	7	12
Dundee	8	3	2	3	11	10	11
Motherwell	8	3	2	3	9	11	11
Hibernian	8	3	2	3	8	11	11
Livingston	8	2	3	3	8	10	9
Kilmarnock	8	2	2	4	8	15	8
Aberdeen	8	2	1	5	9	15	7
Dundee Utd	8	1	2	5	5	16	5
Partick	8	0	2	6	7	14	2

LEADING GOALSCORERS
6 Shota Arveladze (Rangers)
6 Henrik Larsson (Celtic)
6 Nacho Novo (Dundee)

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

Sep 13: Buducnost 2 Napredak 1; Kom Podgorica 0 Red Star 2; Zemun 1 Hajduk K 0; Radnicki O 3 Zeta 2; Partizan 3 OFK 2; Obilic 1 Sutjeska 1; Zeleznik 2 Sartid 0; Borac 0 Vojvodina 0.
Sep 20: Hajduk K 2 Buducnost 0; Napredak 1 Zeleznik 1; Sutjeska 0 Partizan 1; Zeta 1 Zemun 1; Red Star 3 Radnicki O 0; OFK 2 Kom Podgorica 0; Vojvodina 1 Obilic 0; Sartid 1 Borac 0.
Sep 26: Partizan 2 Vojvodina 1.
Sep 27: Buducnost 3 Zeta 1; Kom Podgorica 1 Radnicki O 0; Zeleznik 1 Hajduk K 0; Borac 2 Napredak 1; OFK 3 Sutjeska 2; Obilic 2 Sartid 4.
Sep 28: Zemun 0 Red Star 1.
Oct 4: Red Star 4 Buducnost 0; Napredak 0 Obilic 3; Hajduk K 2 Borac 0; Radnicki O 0 Zemun 0; Sutjeska 0 Kom Podgorica 1; Vojvodina 0 OFK 0; Zeta 1 Zeleznik 0.
Oct 5: Sartid 2 Partizan 1.

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	7	5	1	1	14	3	16
OFK	7	5	1	1	11	6	16
Partizan	7	5	0	2	20	10	15
Sartid	7	5	0	2	14	9	15
Zeleznik	7	4	1	2	10	3	13
Obilic	7	3	1	3	11	9	10
Hajduk K	7	3	1	3	7	6	10
Zemun	7	2	3	2	5	3	9
Buducnost	7	3	0	4	9	15	9
Zeta	7	2	2	3	9	11	8
Napredak	7	2	2	3	6	9	8
Sutjeska	7	2	1	4	8	10	7
Radnicki O	7	1	3	3	4	9	6
Vojvodina	7	1	3	3	3	8	6
Kom Podgorica	7	2	0	5	6	15	6
Borac	7	1	1	5	5	16	4

SPAIN

Saturday, September 13

Celta Vigo 0
Betis 2 (Marcos Assuncao 37, Fernando pen 86) Att: 18,000

Racing Santander 0
Real Sociedad 1 (De Paula 31) Att: 11,396

Real Madrid 7 (Julio Cesar og 21, Raul 32, 34, 75, Zidane 53, Figo pen 59, Ronaldo 70)
Valladolid 2 (Losada pen 56, Chema 60) Att: 64,725

Sevilla 1 (Dario Silva 51)
Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Pandiani 39, Diego Tristan 72) Att: 35,000

Sunday, September 14

Albacete 1 (Pablo 90)
Barcelona 2 (Cocu 2, Luis Enrique 66) Att: 17,500

Athletic Bilbao 4 (Urzaiz 36, 43, Etxeberria 74, pen 86)
Mallorca 0 Att: 36,000

Espanyol 1 (Maxi Rodriguez 13)
Villarreal 2 (Victor 24, Riquelme pen 90) Att: 20,100

Osasuna 1 (Pablo Garcia 36)
Atletico Madrid 0 Att: 14,255

Valencia 1 (Marchena 44)
Malaga 0 Att: 45,000

Zaragoza 3 (Savio 2, Villa pen 7, Galletti 31)
Murcia 0 Att: 30,000

Saturday, September 20

Atletico Madrid 0
Valencia 3 (Vicente 68, Mista 76, 90) Att: 50,000

Barcelona 1 (Ronaldinho 70)
Osasuna 1 (Crutxaga 54) Att: 83,674

Sunday, September 21

Betis 0
Racing Santander 0 Att: 35,000

Deportivo La Coruna 3 (Naybet 53, Luque 55, Pandiani 90)
Albacete 0 Att: 25,000

Malaga 1 (Edgar 75)
Real Madrid 3 (Ronaldo 12, Beckham 72, Guti 85) Att: 26,000

Mallorca 1 (Bruggink 39)
Sevilla 1 (Dario Silva 17) Att: 14,000

Murcia 2 (Michel I 13, Luis Garcia pen 66)
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Etxeberria 39, Tiko 61) Att: 14,000

Real Sociedad 3 (Nihat 56, De Paula 82, 87)
Zaragoza 0 Att: 26,870

Valladolid 3 (Zapata 3, Jesus 10, Ciric pen 82)
Espanyol 1 (Bobson 34) Att: 12,000

Villarreal 1 (Berizzo og 77)
Celta Vigo 1 (Mostovoi 75) Att: 18,000

Saturday, September 27

Athletic Bilbao 1 (Tiko 81)
Real Sociedad 0 Att: 40,000

Celta Vigo 3 (Jesuli 56, Milosevic 72, Mostovoi 82)
Valladolid 2 (Makukula 3, 49) Att: 18,000

Osasuna 3 (Punal pen 21, Ivan Rosado 23, Hector og 25)
Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Luque 28, Pandiani 90) Att: 14,823

Valencia 2 (Mista 4, Ricardo Oliveira 71)
Real Madrid 0 Att: 53,000

Sunday, September 28

Albacete 2 (Parri 16, Mikel 79)
Mallorca 0 Att: 15,000

Atletico Madrid 0
Barcelona 0 Att: 55,000

Espanyol 1 (Tamudo 56)
Malaga 2 (Romero 36, Salva 84) Att: 18,700

Racing Santander 0
Villarreal 2 (Anderson 69, Riquelme 87) Att: 12,160

Sevilla 1 (Antonio 90)
Murcia 0 Att: 35,000

Zaragoza 0
Betis 1 (Marcos Assuncao 81) Att: 28,000

Saturday, October 4

Betis 1 (Marcos Assuncao 88)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Tiko 46) Att: 35,000

Deportivo La Coruna 5 (Fran 6, Romero 35, Sergio 51, Pandiani 56, Scaloni 90)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Lequi 11) Att: 25,000

Villarreal 1 (Victor 4)
Zaragoza 1 (Villa 22) Att: 17,000

Sunday, October 5

Barcelona 0
Valencia 1 (Ricardo Oliveira 14) Att: 75,000

Malaga 2 (Fernando Sanz 13, Miguel Angel 75)
Celta Vigo 1 (Milosevic 71) Att: 21,000

Mallorca 1 (Nadal 83)
Osasuna 1 (Webo 84) Att: 14,000

Murcia 1 (Michel 6)
Albacete 0 Att: 10,234

Real Madrid 2 (Ronaldo 51, 81)
Espanyol 1 (Alex Fernandez 90) Att: 75,000

Real Sociedad 1 (Kovacevic 3)
Sevilla 1 (Dario Silva 13) Att: 27,000

Valladolid 0
Racing Santander 4 (Bodipo 14, 83, Regueiro 56, Nafti 84) Att: 12,500

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valencia	6	5	1	0	9	1	16
Dep La Coruna	6	5	0	1	15	5	15
Real Madrid	6	4	1	1	15	8	13
Osasuna	6	3	2	1	8	5	11
Villarreal	6	2	4	0	7	4	10
Real Sociedad	6	2	3	1	7	4	9
Betis	6	2	3	1	7	5	9
Sevilla	6	2	3	1	6	5	9
Barcelona	6	2	3	1	5	4	9
Athletic Bilbao	6	2	2	2	8	6	8
Racing Santander	6	2	2	2	7	5	8
Malaga	6	2	1	3	5	7	7
Valladolid	6	2	1	3	9	16	7
Celta Vigo	6	1	3	2	7	9	6
Murcia	6	1	3	2	5	8	6
Mallorca	6	1	2	3	5	10	5
Zaragoza	6	1	1	4	4	8	4
Atletico Madrid	6	1	1	4	2	10	4
Albacete	6	1	0	5	3	9	3
Espanyol	6	0	2	4	7	12	2

LEADING GOALSCORERS
6 Walter Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna)
5 Ronaldo (Real Madrid)
4 Savo Milosevic (Celta Vigo)

SWEDEN

Sep 14: Orebro 0 AIK 0; Halmstads 2 Orgryte 1; Osters 1 Sundsvall 1.
Sep 15: Helsingborgs 0 Malmo 0; Elfsborg 3 Landskrona 0; IFK Gothenburg 3 Enkopings 0.
Sep 16: Hammarby 2 Djurgardens 3.
Sep 20: AIK 4 Elfsborg 0.
Sep 21: Sundsvall 2 IFK Gothenburg 2; Malmo 2 Djurgardens 1.
Sep 22: Enkopings 2 Orebro 0; Hammarby 1 Halmstads 0; Orgryte 4 Osters 2.
Sep 23: Landskrona 0 Helsingborgs 3.
Sep 24: IFK Gothenburg 1 Djurgardens 0.
Sep 28: Djurgardens 1 Helsingborgs 0; Malmo 3 AIK 0; Osters 1 Orebro 2.
Sep 29: Elfsborg 2 Halmstads 1; Hammarby 7 Enkopings 0; Landskrona 3 Sundsvall 2.
Sep 30: Orgryte 4 IFK Gothenburg 1.
Oct 5: Enkopings 0 Malmo 1; Orebro 1 Orgryte 2; Elfsborg 4 Osters 0.
Oct 6: Halmstads 2 Helsingborgs 4; AIK 3 Landskrona 0; IFK Gothenburg 0 Hammarby 1; Sundsvall 1 Djurgardens 4.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Djurgardens	24	17	1	6	54	22	52
Malmo	24	14	6	4	49	19	48
Hammarby	24	14	5	5	47	29	47
Orgryte	24	12	3	9	39	39	39
Helsingborgs	24	11	4	9	31	31	37
Halmstads	24	11	3	10	38	32	36
Elfsborg	24	9	7	8	29	31	34
IFK Gothenburg	24	9	6	9	33	26	33
AIK	24	9	6	9	35	33	33
Orebro	24	9	6	9	27	32	33
Landskrona	24	7	7	10	22	37	28
Sundsvall	24	2	10	12	22	40	16
Osters	24	3	7	14	26	48	16
Enkopings	24	3	5	16	21	54	14

SWITZERLAND

Sep 14: Aarau 1 Thun 2; Neuchatel Xamax 3 Grasshopper 1; Wil 1900 2 Servette 2; Young Boys 0 St Gallen 0; Zurich 0 Basle 1.
Sep 28: Basle 2 Young Boys 0; Grasshopper 2 Aarau 3; Servette 3 Zurich 1; St Gallen 3 Neuchatel Xamax 1; Thun 3 Wil 1900 2.
Oct 2: Aarau 3 St Gallen 1; Thun 1 Servette 1; Wil 1900 2 Grasshopper 1; Neuchatel Xamax 1 Basle 3.
Oct 5: Basle 4 Wil 1900 0; Grasshopper 2 Thun 1; Servette 3 Aarau 1; St Gallen 2 Zurich 1; Young Boys 2 Neuchatel Xamax 1.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Basle	13	13	0	0	43	10	39
Servette	13	7	4	2	28	21	25
Young Boys	12	7	1	4	22	18	22
Aarau	13	5	4	4	20	19	19
St Gallen	13	4	4	5	19	22	16
Neuchatel X	13	4	2	7	17	21	14
Thun	13	3	5	5	15	26	14
Grasshopper	13	4	1	8	18	28	13
Wil 1900	13	2	3	8	18	32	9
Zurich	12	2	2	8	17	20	8

TURKEY

Sep 12: Besiktas 3 Malatyaspor 1.
Sep 13: Adanaspor 2 Diyarbakirspor 1; Samsunspor 3 Istanbulspor 3; Rizespor 0 Trabzonspor 3; Konyaspor 1 Galatasaray 0.
Sep 14: Sebatspor 3 Elazigspor 1; Ankaragucu 1 Denizlispor 1; Bursaspor 0 Genclerbirligi 0; Fenerbahce 3 Gaziantepspor 1.
Sep 19: Trabzonspor 2 Samsunspor 1.
Sep 20: Istanbulspor 1 Besiktas 1; Malatyaspor 1 Ankaragucu 0; Gaziantepspor 1 Adanaspor 0; Genclerbirligi 4 Konyaspor 0.
Sep 21: Denizlispor 4 Bursaspor 0; Elazigspor 1 Rizespor 1; Galatasaray 2 Fenerbahce 2; Diyarbakirspor 1 Sebatspor 0.
Sep 26: Adanaspor 0 Galatasaray 2.
Sep 27: Samsunspor 2 Elazigspor 0; Fenerbahce 1 Genclerbirligi 0; Ankaragucu 2 Istanbulspor 1; Bursaspor 2 Konyaspor 1.
Sep 28: Denizlispor 1 Malatyaspor 0; Rizespor 2 Diyarbakirspor 1; Sebatspor 1 Gaziantepspor 2; Besiktas 5 Trabzonspor 0.
Oct 3: Konyaspor 2 Fenerbahce 4.
Oct 4: Galatasaray 4 Sebatspor 3; Istanbulspor 0 Denizlispor 3; Malatyaspor 2 Bursaspor 1; Genclerbirligi 6 Adanaspor 0.
Oct 5: Elazigspor 1 Besiktas 5; Gaziantepspor 2 Rizespor 0; Trabzonspor 3 Ankaragucu 0; Diyarbakirspor 2 Samsunspor 2.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Besiktas	8	7	1	0	24	6	22
Fenerbahce	8	6	1	1	20	10	19
Galatasaray	8	5	2	1	16	11	17
Trabzonspor	8	5	1	2	14	11	16
Malatyaspor	8	5	0	3	14	8	15
Denizlispor	8	4	2	2	15	7	14
Istanbulspor	8	4	2	2	15	10	14
Gaziantepspor	8	4	1	3	10	8	13
Rizespor	8	3	2	3	8	13	11
Genclerbirligi	8	3	1	4	16	9	10
Ankaragucu	8	3	1	4	10	13	10
Konyaspor	8	2	2	4	11	17	8
Samsunspor	8	2	2	4	13	20	8
Diyarbakirspor	8	2	1	5	11	15	7
Bursaspor	8	1	3	4	5	12	6
Adanaspor	8	2	0	6	6	16	6
Elazigspor	8	1	2	5	10	24	5
Sebatspor	8	1	0	7	10	18	3

UKRAINE

Sep 13: Karpaty 3 Dynamo 4.
Sep 14: Shakhtar 4 Chornomorets 1; Arsenal 1 Volyn 0; Dnipro 2 Vorskla 1; Metalurh Z 1 Metalurh D 4; Borysfen 1 Illichivets 1; Zirka 1 Obolon 1; Kryvbas 1 Tavriya 0.
Sep 19: Metalurh D 2 Borysfen 0; Tavriya 0 Dnipro 2.
Sep 20: Obolon 3 Shakhtar 4; Chornomorets 1 Arsenal 1; Vorskla 1 Metalurh Z 0; Illichivets 2 Karpaty 1; Volyn 2 Kryvbas 0.
Sep 21: Dynamo 2 Zirka 0.
Sep 26: Obolon 0 Dynamo 4.
Sep 27: Borysfen 2 Vorskla 0; Zirka 2 Illichivets 2; Kryvbas 3 Chornomorets 3; Metalurh Z 1 Tavriya 0.
Sep 28: Karpaty 0 Metalurh D 2; Shakhtar 2 Arsenal 1.
Sep 29: Dnipro 5 Volyn 1.
Oct 4: Illichivets 1 Obolon 1; Metalurh D 1 Zirka 0; Vorskla 0 Karpaty 0; Tavriya 1 Borysfen 2; Volyn 1 Metalurh Z 0; Chornomorets 2 Dnipro 1; Arsenal 2 Kryvbas 0.
Oct 5: Dynamo 1 Shakhtar 1.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shakhtar	11	10	1	0	27	8	31
Dynamo	11	8	2	1	27	9	26
Metalurh D	11	7	4	0	21	8	25
Dnipro	11	8	0	3	24	10	24
Chornomorets	11	4	5	2	15	14	17
Illichivets	11	3	6	2	14	13	15
Arsenal	11	4	2	5	14	15	14
Obolon	11	3	3	5	10	15	12
Borysfen	11	3	3	5	7	12	12
Metalurh Z	11	3	2	6	9	15	11
Vorskla	11	2	5	4	7	16	11
Kryvbas	11	2	4	5	8	15	10
Karpaty	11	2	3	6	11	16	9
Volyn	11	2	2	7	9	20	8
Tavriya	11	1	4	6	5	13	7
Zirka	11	1	4	6	6	15	7

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, September 26

Independiente 0
Arsenal 0

Saturday, September 27

Estudiantes 1 (Farias 56)
Colon Santa Fe 1 (Romagnoli 1)

Lanus 1 (Alvarez pen 54)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Obolo pen 17)

Newell's Old Boys 2 (Rosales 74, Vasquez 85)
Olimpo 0

Nueva Chicago 1 (Ramos pen 73)
San Lorenzo 2 (Zabaleta 12, Santana 36)

Sunday, September 28

Atletico Rafaela 4 (Villa 37, pen 71, Del Bono 64, Di Lorenzo 66)
Gimnasia LP 0

Chacarita Juniors 0
Banfield 3 (Bustos Montoya 34, 43, Cervera 36)

Racing Club 1 (Fernandez pen 90)
Boca Juniors 4 (Iarley 43, Tevez 52, 56, Donnet 81)

River Plate 2 (Cavenaghi 69, Dominguez 84)
Quilmes 2 (Herbella 1, Virviescas og 32)

Talleres Cordoba 2 (Maidana 45, Carrizo 90)
Rosario Central 2 (Messera 4, Belloso 26)

Tuesday, September 30

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Moreno y Fabianesi 89)
Newell's Old Boys 1 (Patino 82)

Olimpo 0
Independiente 2 (Quinteros 32, Caggiano 36)

San Lorenzo 1 (Capria 36)
Estudiantes 0

Wednesday, October 1

Arsenal 1 (Gonzalez 9)
River Plate 0

Banfield 2 (Bilos 71, Sanchez pen 89)
Quilmes 1 (Brana 14)

Boca Juniors 0
Lanus 0

Chacarita Juniors 0
Racing Club 0

Gimnasia LP 0
Nueva Chicago 2 (Martinez Ramos 4, Saad 10)

Rosario Central 2 (Herrera 43, 54)
Atletico Rafaela 1 (Del Bono 14)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Obolo pen 28, Zarate 30)
Talleres Cordoba 1 (Carrizo pen 90)

Saturday, October 4

Independiente 1 (Rios 54)
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Carignano 52, Savoia 83)

Newell's Old Boys 0
San Lorenzo 1 (Michelini 15)

Talleres Cordoba 1 (Velazquez 62)
Boca Juniors 1 (Schiavi pen 27)

Sunday, October 5

Atletico Rafaela 1 (Villa 44)
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Zarate 77)

Estudiantes 1 (Sosa 9)
Gimnasia LP 0

Lanus 1 (Mannara 47)
Chacarita Juniors 1 (Graf 77)

Nueva Chicago 0
Rosario Central 1 (Herrera 43)

Racing Club 1 (Ubed 43)
Banfield 2 (Cervera 54, 72)

River Plate 3 (Cavenaghi pen 14, 40, Ferreyra 86)
Olimpo 0

Monday, October 6

Quilmes 2 (Herbella 22, Ceballos 57)
Arsenal 1 (Vilallonga 62)

ARGENTINA – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	7	5	2	0	15	3	17
Rosario Central	8	4	3	1	12	11	15
Colon Santa Fe	8	3	5	0	13	6	14
Banfield	7	4	2	1	10	3	14
San Lorenzo	8	4	2	2	10	6	14
Independiente	8	3	4	1	10	6	13
Quilmes	8	3	3	2	12	9	12
Atletico Rafaela	8	3	3	2	11	8	12
Newell's OB	8	3	3	2	9	6	12
Estudiantes	8	2	4	2	6	5	10
Arsenal	8	2	4	2	7	7	10
River Plate	8	2	3	3	9	11	9
Racing Club	8	1	5	2	8	11	8
Lanus	8	0	7	1	6	8	7
Chacarita Jnrs*	8	2	4	2	6	9	7
Talleres Cordoba	8	1	4	3	9	16	7
Velez Sarsfield	8	1	3	4	9	15	6
Nueva Chicago	8	1	2	5	7	12	5
Gimnasia LP	8	0	4	4	4	12	4
Olimpo	8	0	3	5	3	12	3

**3pts deducted for crowd violence*

LEADING GOALSCORER
5 Carlos Tevez (Boca Juniors)

BOLIVIA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 21: Aurora 2 Jorge Wilstermann 2; Blooming 1 Oriente 2; Bolivar 2 The Strongest 2; Real Potosi 2 Independiente 0; San Jose 2 Iberoamericana 0; Union Central 0 Guabira 1.
Sep 24: Blooming 2 Aurora 1; Bolivar 6 San Jose 2; Independiente 2 Guabira 1; Union Central 0 Real Potosi 1.
Sep 25: Iberoamericana 1 The Strongest 3; Jorge Wilstermann 3 Oriente 2.
Sep 27: Guabira 0 The Strongest 1.
Sep 28: Blooming 6 San Jose 1; Bolivar 2 Union Central 2; Iberoamericana 1 Oriente 1; Real Potosi 1 Aurora 1; Jorge Wilstermann 1 Independiente 2.
Oct 1: Jorge Wilstermann 1 Iberoamericana 1; Union Central 1 Aurora 1; Bolivar 6 Blooming 0; San Jose 4 Real Potosi 0; Independiente 1 The Strongest 6.
Oct 4: The Strongest 0 Bolivar 1.
Oct 5: Jorge Wilstermann 1 Aurora 1; Iberoamericana 3 San Jose 0; Oriente 1 Blooming 1; Guabira 2 Union Central 0; Independiente 2 Real Potosi 1.

BOLIVIA – CLOSING: GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolivar	9	4	2	3	22	11	14
Aurora	9	3	5	1	12	11	14
Blooming	9	4	1	4	16	16	13
Real Potosi	9	4	1	4	11	14	13
San Jose	9	3	2	4	14	20	11
Union Central	9	1	3	5	9	13	6

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
The Strongest	9	5	1	3	17	9	16
Oriente	8	4	3	1	18	8	15
J Wilstermann	9	3	4	2	11	10	13
Independiente	9	4	1	4	10	19	13
Iberoamericana	9	3	2	4	10	13	11
Guabira	8	2	1	5	7	9	7

BRAZIL

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 13: Corinthians 2 Fortaleza 0; Gremio 1 Bahia 1; Santos 5 Criciuma 2; Atletico Paranaense 1 Cruzeiro 4.
Sep 14: Vitoria 1 Flamengo 0; Vasco da Gama 1 Fluminense 0; Goias 3 Internacional 1; Figueirense 2 Sao Paulo 2; Atletico Mineiro 2 Ponte Preta 0; Paysandu 1 Sao Caetano 0; Guarani 2 Juventude 0; Parana 2 Coritiba 3.
Sep 20: Fluminense 1 Paysandu 1; Internacional 2 Guarani 0; Cruzeiro 3 Santos 0; Coritiba 1 Gremio 0; Ponte Preta 4 Parana 0.
Sep 21: Bahia 3 Vasco da Gama 0; Criciuma 1 Corinthians 0; Fortaleza 1 Vitoria 0; Flamengo 1 Goias 1; Juventude 4 Atletico Paranaense 0; Sao Caetano 0 Figueirense 2; Sao Paulo 2 Atletico Mineiro 2.
Sep 24: Guarani 5 Flamengo 3; Goias 0 Fortaleza 1; Parana 4 Sao Paulo 2; Paysandu 4 Bahia 0; Vitoria 1 Criciuma 1; Gremio 2 Ponte Preta 2;

Atletico Paranaense 2 Internacional 1; Santos 1 Juventude 1; Corinthians 0 Cruzeiro 1.
Sep 25: Figueirense 2 Fluminense 2; Vasco da Gama 2 Coritiba 1; Atletico Mineiro 3 Sao Caetano 1.
Sep 27: Internacional 1 Santos 0; Flamengo 2 Atletico Paranaense 1; Sao Paulo 3 Gremio 1.
Sep 28: Fluminense 0 Atletico Mineiro 1; Fortaleza 3 Guarani 0; Criciuma 1 Goias 0; Juventude 6 Corinthians 1; Ponte Preta 2 Vasco da Gama 2; Bahia 1 Figueirense 1; Cruzeiro 1 Vitoria 0; Coritiba 1 Paysandu 0; Sao Caetano 2 Parana 0.
Oct 4: Atletico Paranaense 0 Fluminense 0; Paysandu 0 Internacional 0; Gremio 3 Figueirense 1; Sao Caetano 1 Ponte Preta 0; Sao Paulo 1 Santos 2.
Oct 5: Vitoria 1 Corinthians 2; Flamengo 0 Parana 3; Goias 3 Bahia 1; Atletico Mineiro 2 Vasco da Gama 1; Juventude 2 Fortaleza 2; Criciuma 1 Cruzeiro 3; Guarani 2 Coritiba 1.
Oct 8: Cruzeiro 2 Flamengo 0; Coritiba 1 Goias 0; Bahia 3 Sao Paulo 0; Santos 1 Guarani 1; Ponte Preta 2 Atletico Paranaense 2; Vasco da Gama 1 Juventude 1; Corinthians 0 Sao Caetano 3; Fortaleza 2 Gremio 2.
Oct 9: Fluminense 2 Vitoria 0; Parana 4 Paysandu 2; Figueirense 0 Atletico Mineiro 1; Internacional 2 Criciuma 0.

BRAZIL – NATIONAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cruzeiro	35	22	7	6	76	39	73
Santos	35	18	9	8	61	40	63
Coritiba	35	18	8	9	56	40	62
At Mineiro	35	16	12	7	62	47	60
Sao Paulo	35	16	10	9	61	51	58
Internacional*	35	16	7	12	48	40	57
Sao Caetano**	35	14	12	9	36	28	57
Criciuma	35	15	7	13	45	45	52
Guarani	35	14	8	13	52	53	50
Corinthians**	35	12	11	12	50	46	49
Parana	35	14	6	15	63	58	48
Flamengo	35	12	9	14	48	58	45
Vitoria	35	12	8	15	39	48	44
Goias	35	11	11	13	51	48	44
Figueirense	35	11	11	13	40	45	44
Vasco da Gama	35	11	11	13	42	51	44
At Paranaense	35	11	8	16	44	53	41
Ponte Preta*/**	35	9	14	12	49	55	40
Bahia	35	10	9	16	42	58	39
Fortaleza	35	10	8	17	41	54	38
Fluminense**	35	9	9	17	37	53	38
Juventude*	35	8	11	16	40	56	38
Paysandu**	35	11	11	13	58	57	36
Gremio	35	7	9	19	35	53	30

**Ponte Preta have been docked the 4pts gained from the 1-1 draw with Internacional and the 1-0 win over Juventude for fielding an ineligible player in each game; Internacional were awarded two extra points (ie the equivalent of a win), and Juventude received three points.*

***Paysandu have been docked the 8pts gained from the 2-2 draw with Corinthians, the 3-2 win over Ponte Preta, the 1-0 win over Sao Caetano and the 1-1 draw with Fluminense for fielding ineligible players in each game; Corinthians and Fluminense were awarded two extra points (ie the equivalent of a win), and Ponte Preta and Sao Caetano received three points.*

In both cases the won-drawn-lost and goals records were not altered.

CHILE

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 12: U Catolica 1 San Felipe 2.
Sep 13: Palestino 1 Union Espanola 2; Coquimbo Unido 1 Huachipato 2; U de Chile 4 Cobresal 0.
Sep 14: Santiago Wanderers 3 Puerto Montt 2; Rangers 2 Colo Colo 1; U de Concepcion 1 Audax Italiano 0; Cobreloa 4 Dep Temuco 2.
Sep 20: San Felipe 2 Puerto Montt 3; Audax Italiano 0 U de Chile 3; U Catolica 3 Palestino 1.
Sep 21: Dep Temuco 2 Santiago Wanderers 2; Huachipato 2 Cobreloa 2; Cobresal 5 Rangers 2; Union Espanola 2 U de Concepcion 2; Colo Colo 4 Coquimbo Unido 1.
Sep 26: U de Chile 1 Union Espanola 4.
Sep 27: Palestino 4 San Felipe 2; Santiago Wanderers 1 Huachipato 0; Cobreloa 1 Colo Colo 2.
Sep 28: Rangers 0 Audax Italiano 1; U de Concepcion 3 U Catolica 0; Coquimbo Unido 0 Cobresal 0; Puerto Montt 5 Dep Temuco 1.
Oct 3: Union Espanola 2 Rangers 1.
Oct 4: Colo Colo 3 Santiago Wanderers 0; Palestino 2 U de Concepcion 2; San Felipe 3 Dep Temuco 1.
Oct 5: U Catolica 2 U de Chile 1; Audax Italiano 2 Coquimbo Unido 1; Huachipato 2 Puerto Montt 1; Cobresal 3 Cobreloa 3.

CHILE – CLOSING: GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U de Chile	10	4	1	5	17	14	13
Huachipato	10	4	1	5	18	21	13
Cobreloa	10	3	3	4	20	18	12
Dep Temuco	10	2	1	7	15	29	7

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	10	6	3	1	25	13	21
Palestino	10	5	1	4	21	20	16
Sant Wanderers	10	4	4	2	14	15	16
Audax Italiano	10	3	1	6	9	18	10

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Union Espanola	10	6	3	1	25	15	21
U Catolica	10	5	1	4	17	15	16
Puerto Montt	10	5	0	5	20	19	15
Coquimbo Unido	10	1	2	7	10	19	5

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U de Concepcion	10	6	4	0	24	11	22
Cobresal	10	3	4	3	17	16	13
Rangers	10	4	1	5	14	20	13
San Felipe	10	3	2	5	17	20	11

COLOMBIA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 14: Pereira 1 Once Caldas 1; Bucaramanga 0 Envigado 2; Dep Cali 0 America 0; Dep Pasto 3 Centauros 0; Tolima 1 At Huila 1; Indep Medellin 2 At Nacional 1; Quindio 2 Tulua 2; Magdalena 3 At Junior 1; Millonarios 2 Indep Santa Fe 1.
Sep 21: Indep Santa Fe 1 Dep Pasto 0; Dep Cali 1 Tolima 2; Bucaramanga 1 Indep Medellin 2; Pereira 2 Quindio 0; At Junior 2 Magdalena 0; Tulua 2 Millonarios 1; At Nacional 1 Once Caldas 1; At Huila 2 Envigado 0; Centauros 1 America 3.
Sep 24: Centauros 1 Indep Santa Fe 0; America 1 At Huila 1; Envigado 1 At Nacional 2; Once Caldas 2 Tulua 4; Millonarios 2 At Junior 0; Magdalena 2 Pereira 1; Quindio 3 Bucaramanga 2; Indep Medellin 2 Dep Cali 0; Tolima 0 Dep Pasto 1.
Sep 28: Indep Santa Fe 0 Tolima 0; Dep Pasto 1 Indep Medellin 1; Bucaramanga 0 Magdalena 1; Dep Cali 3 Quindio 0; Pereira 2 Millonarios 0; At Junior 4 Once Caldas 2; Tulua 0 Envigado 0; At Nacional 2 America 0; At Huila 2 Centauros 1.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Magdalena	12	7	1	4	14	10	22
Dep Cali	12	6	3	3	21	11	21
Millonarios	12	6	2	4	15	9	20
Tolima	12	5	5	2	16	11	20
Pereira	12	5	4	3	12	9	19
Indep Medellin	12	5	3	4	14	9	18
At Nacional	12	5	3	4	13	9	18
Indep Santa Fe	12	4	5	3	9	9	17
Dep Pasto	12	4	4	4	12	12	16
At Huila	12	4	4	4	16	18	16
At Junior	12	4	3	5	16	20	15
Tulua	12	4	2	6	12	19	14
America	12	3	5	4	11	12	14
Once Caldas	12	3	5	4	14	17	14
Quindio	12	3	5	4	12	16	14
Centauros	12	4	1	7	11	19	13
Envigado	12	3	4	5	11	13	13
Bucaramanga	12	3	1	8	15	21	10

ECUADOR

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 14: Aucas 0 Emelec 2; Dep Quito 2 El Nacional 1; Tecnico Universitario 0 LDU Quito 0; Dep Cuenca 4 Espoli 0; Barcelona 4 Manta 0.
Sep 19: El Nacional 3 Tecnico Universitario 1; Dep Cuenca 3 Aucas 1.
Sep 20: Espoli 1 Manta 1; Emelec 2 Dep Quito 0.
Sep 21: LDU Quito 0 Barcelona 0.
Sep 24: Aucas 0 Espoli 0; Manta 1 LDU Quito 1; Dep Quito 3 Dep Cuenca 1; Barcelona 1 El Nacional 1; Tecnico Universitario 3 Emelec 2.
Sep 28: Aucas 1 Dep Quito 0; El Nacional 5 Manta 1; Dep Cuenca 2 Tecnico Universitario 0; Espoli 3 LDU Quito 4; Emelec 1 Barcelona 1.
Oct 3: Dep Quito 2 Espoli 2.
Oct 5: LDU Quito 1 El Nacional 2; Tecnico Universitario 2 Aucas 0; Manta 0 Emelec 5; Barcelona 1 Dep Cuenca 0.

ECUADOR – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Quito	16	9	2	5	23	20	29
LDU Quito	16	8	4	4	28	15	28
Barcelona	16	7	7	2	24	11	28
Emelec	16	8	3	5	29	18	27
El Nacional	16	7	5	4	28	18	26
Dep Cuenca	16	7	3	6	19	15	24
Espoli	16	5	6	5	20	27	21
Aucas	16	4	3	9	21	27	15
Manta	16	2	5	9	12	34	11
Tecnico Univ	16	2	4	10	11	30	10

PARAGUAY

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 13: Olimpia 1 San Lorenzo 1.
Sep 14: Guarani 1 Sol de America 0; Libertad 0 Sport Colombia 1; Tacuary 0 12 de Octubre 2; Sportivo Luqueno 1 Cerro Porteno 0.
Sep 19: Sol de America 2 Libertad 1.
Sep 21: Cerro Porteno 0 San Lorenzo 1; 12 de Octubre 0 Olimpia 2; Sport Colombia 2 Tacuary 2; Sportivo Luqueno 1 Guarani 0.
Sep 27: Tacuary 0 Sol de America 0; Olimpia 3 Sport Colombia 2.
Sep 28: Libertad 3 Sportivo Luqueno 2; San Lorenzo 0 12 de Octubre 1; Guarani 1 Cerro Porteno 1.
Oct 4: Sol de America 1 Olimpia 1.
Oct 5: Sport Colombia 2 San Lorenzo 2; Sportivo Luqueno 2 Tacuary 1; Cerro Porteno 1 12 de Octubre 0; Guarani 0 Libertad 0.

PARAGUAY – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	15	7	6	2	24	14	27
Libertad	15	7	5	3	25	17	26
Cerro Porteno	15	7	4	4	19	13	25
Guarani	15	6	5	4	17	12	23
Sportivo Luqueno	15	6	5	4	19	17	23
Tacuary	15	4	5	6	19	21	17
Sol de America	15	3	6	6	11	13	15
12 de Octubre	15	3	6	6	6	10	15
Sport Colombia	15	4	3	8	21	30	15
San Lorenzo	15	3	5	7	14	28	14

PERU

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 14: Sporting Cristal 3 At Universidad 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Sport Boys 0; Coronel Bolognesi 0 Union Huaral 1; Alianza Lima 1 Cienciano 0; Melgar 4 Estudiantes 0; Dep Wanka 1 Universitario 1.
Sep 20: Universitario 0 Sporting Cristal 0; Cienciano 3 Deportivo Wanka 0.
Sep 21: Sport Boys 0 Coronel Bolognesi 1; Union Huaral 0 Melgar 1; Estudiantes 0 Alianza Lima 0; At Universidad 0 Alianza Atletico 0.
Sep 27: Sporting Cristal 1 Union Huaral 1.
Sep 28: Alianza Atletico 3 Estudiantes 1; Melgar 4 Universitario 1; Coronel Bolognesi 2 Cienciano 0; Dep Wanka 0 Sport Boys 4; Alianza Lima 5 At Universidad 0.
Oct 1: Sporting Cristal 3 Melgar 1; Dep Wanka 0 Alianza Atletico 2; At Universidad 0 Estudiantes 0; Alianza Lima 2 Coronel Bolognesi 1; Universitario 0 Sport Boys 1.
Oct 4: Estudiantes 1 Universitario 2.
Oct 5: Sport Boys 1 Union Huaral 0; Alianza Atletico 3 Coronel Bolognesi 2; Melgar 4 Dep Wanka 0; Alianza Lima 2 Sporting Cristal 2.

PERU – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alianza Atletico	9	6	3	0	17	6	21
Alianza Lima	9	5	3	1	17	6	18
Melgar	9	5	0	4	20	13	15
Sporting Cristal	9	3	5	1	13	9	14
Sport Boys	9	4	2	3	13	11	14
Coronel Bolognesi	9	4	0	5	13	11	12
Union Huaral	8	2	3	3	5	7	9
Universitario	9	2	3	4	7	13	9
Cienciano	7	2	2	3	6	6	8
At Universidad	8	2	2	4	4	13	8
Dep Wanka	9	2	2	5	4	15	8
Estudiantes	9	1	3	5	6	15	6

URUGUAY

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 12: Miramar Misiones 1 Nacional 1.
Sep 13: Danubio 0 Defensor 2.
Sep 14: Penarol 2 Dep Maldonado 0; Tacuarembo 1 Wanderers 1; Dep Colonia 1 Liverpool 2; Bella Vista M 1 River Plate 1; Villa Espanola 1 Juventud 3; Cerro 0 Fenix 0; Plaza 0 Central Espanol 2.
Sep 19: Defensor 0 Cerro 1.
Sep 20: Bella Vista M 2 Penarol 2; Plaza 0 Tacuarembo 2.
Sep 21: Liverpool 0 Nacional 1; Miramar Misiones 2 Juventud 1; Dep Colonia 0 Fenix 1; Wanderers 2 River Plate 2; Central Espanol 1 Villa Espanola 0; Dep Maldonado 1 Danubio 1.
Sep 27: Cerro 2 Central Espanol 2; Nacional 1 Fenix 2.
Sep 28: Defensor 4 Tacuarembo 0; Dep Colonia 0 Wanderers 1; Danubio 2 Miramar Misiones 1; Juventud 0 River Plate 2; Dep Maldonado 0 Bella Vista M 0; Liverpool 3 Plaza 1; Penarol 2 Villa Espanola 0.
Oct 4: Penarol 1 Liverpool 0; Villa Espanola 0 Defensor 1.
Oct 5: Juventud 3 Tacuarembo 1; River Plate 1 Miramar 3; Dep Colonia 1 Plaza 1; Central Espanol 0 Wanderers 1; Danubio 1 Cerro 3; Fenix 0 Dep Maldonado 1; Nacional 2 Bella Vista M 3.

URUGUAY – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Penarol	8	7	1	0	13	3	22
Cerro	9	5	2	2	13	7	17
Central Espanol	9	5	1	3	11	8	16
Miramar	9	4	3	2	13	9	15
River Plate	9	4	3	2	13	12	15
Bella Vista M	9	4	3	2	11	11	15
Nacional	9	4	2	3	17	14	14
Danubio	8	4	2	2	13	10	14
Fenix	9	4	2	3	11	9	14
Dep Maldonado	9	4	2	3	7	7	14
Defensor	9	4	0	5	13	10	12
Wanderers	9	3	3	3	10	10	12
Liverpool	9	3	3	3	9	9	12
Tacuarembo	9	2	2	5	8	15	8
Dep Colonia	9	1	3	5	8	14	6
Juventud	9	2	0	7	9	17	6
Villa Espanola	9	1	2	6	10	15	5
Plaza	9	1	2	6	7	16	5

VENEZUELA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 14: Mineros Guayana 1 Ital-Chacao 0; Estudiantes 3 Carabobo 2; Caracas 2 Maracaibo 0; Trujillanos 1 El Vigia 1; Dep Tachira 0 Monagas 0.
Sep 17: Ital-Chacao 2 Dep Tachira 3; Monagas 3 Trujillanos 0; El Vigia 1 Caracas 1; Maracaibo 0 Estudiantes 1; Carabobo 1 Mineros Guayana 2.
Sep 21: Carabobo 3 Ital-Chacao 4; Mineros Guayana 1 Maracaibo 0; Estudiantes 0 El Vigia 1; Caracas 6 Monagas 0; Trujillanos 0 Dep Tachira 1.
Sep 28: Ital-Chacao 0 Trujillanos 2; Dep Tachira 2 Caracas 2; Monagas 1 Estudiantes 0; El Vigia 0 Mineros Guayana 0; Maracaibo 0 Carabobo 0.
Oct 1: Maracaibo 3 Ital-Chacao 0; Carabobo 2 El Vigia 2; Mineros Guayana 1 Monagas 0; Estudiantes 0 Dep Tachira 1; Caracas 2 Trujillanos 1.
Oct 5: Ital-Chacao 4 Caracas 1; Trujillanos 0 Estudiantes 1; Dep Tachira 3 Mineros Guayana 0; Monagas 1 Carabobo 1; El Vigia 0 Maracaibo 0.

VENEZUELA – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Tachira	9	5	4	0	13	6	19
Mineros Guayana	9	6	1	2	11	8	19
Caracas	9	5	3	1	19	9	18
Ital-Chacao	9	3	2	4	14	16	11
Estudiantes	9	3	2	4	7	10	11
Monagas	9	3	2	4	10	15	11
Maracaibo	9	2	4	3	7	6	10
El Vigia	9	1	6	2	8	9	9
Carabobo	9	1	4	4	12	15	7
Trujillanos	9	1	2	6	5	12	5

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

MEXICO

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 13: Veracruz 0 Atlante 3; Cruz Azul 1 Jaguares 3; Monterrey 3 San Luis 2; Guadalajara 2 Tigres 3; Necaxa 1 Gallos Blancos 0.
Sep 14: Irapuato 2 Toluca 1; Pumas UNAM 1 Pachuca 2; Puebla 4 Morelia 2; America 3 Atlas 0; Tecos UAG 3 Santos 3.
Sep 16: Atlante 3 Cruz Azul 3.
Sep 20: Jaguares 1 Veracruz 0; Santos 5 Monterrey 5; Morelia 0 Pumas UNAM 3; Tigres 2 Necaxa 1; San Luis 1 America 5; Atlas 6 Irapuato 1.
Sep 21: Atlante 1 Tecos UAG 0; Toluca 2 Guadalajara 1; Pachuca 4 Cruz Azul 1; Gallos Blancos 0 Puebla 2.
Sep 24: Puebla 0 Tigres 1; Veracruz 3 Pachuca 1; Cruz Azul 0 Morelia 2; Tecos UAG 3 Jaguares 2; Necaxa 1 Toluca 0; America 0 Santos 0; Pumas UNAM 2 Gallos Blancos 0; Atlas 4 San Luis 1; Irapuato 2 Guadalajara 3; Monterrey 1 Atlante 0.
Sep 27: Jaguares 3 Monterrey 2; Morelia 2 Veracruz 0; Tigres 1 Pumas UNAM 1; San Luis 0 Irapuato 0; Guadalajara 2 Necaxa 3.
Sep 28: Toluca 0 Puebla 0; Gallos Blancos 3 Cruz Azul 3; Pachuca 2 Tecos UAG 1; Atlante 0 America 0; Santos 3 Atlas 2.
Oct 4: Veracruz 3 Gallos Blancos 0; Monterrey 2 Pachuca 2; Cruz Azul 1 Tigres 1; San Luis 3 Santos 0; Atlas 2 Atlante 1.
Oct 5: America 5 Jaguares 0; Tecos UAG 1 Morelia 0; Pumas UNAM 3 Toluca 2; Puebla 1 Guadalajara 1; Irapuato 1 Necaxa 3.

MEXICO – OPENING: GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pachuca	11	4	5	2	16	13	17
Puebla	11	4	4	3	15	14	16
Toluca	10	4	2	4	14	13	14
Monterrey	11	3	5	3	22	22	14
Atlas	11	3	2	6	20	21	11

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tigres	10	6	3	1	19	9	21
Morelia	11	4	2	5	15	18	14
Jaguares	11	4	1	6	14	23	13
Cruz Azul	11	2	5	4	15	20	11
San Luis	11	2	4	5	14	19	10

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pumas UNAM	11	6	3	2	21	14	21
Tecos UAG	11	6	2	3	17	14	20
Santos	11	4	5	2	22	17	17
America	11	4	4	3	22	12	16
Gallos Blancos	11	0	2	9	8	27	2

GROUP 4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Necaxa	11	5	5	1	18	12	20
Atlante	11	4	4	3	18	14	16
Veracruz	11	4	3	4	16	17	15
Irapuato	11	4	3	4	16	19	15
Guadalajara	11	3	2	6	15	19	11

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Cuauhtemoc Blanco (America)
8 Alex Fernandes (Monterrey)
8 Carlos Morales (Atlas)
8 Ignacio Quinteros (Puebla)
8 Luis Rey (Atlante)

UNITED STATES

Sep 13: DC United 2 San Jose Earthquakes 1; MetroStars 1 New England Revolution 2; Columbus Crew 3 Dallas Burn 2; Colorado Rapids 1 Kansas City Wizards 0; Los Angeles Galaxy 0 Chicago Fire 2.
Sep 18: New England Revolution 0 Colorado Rapids 0 (aet).
Sep 20: MetroStars 1 Columbus Crew 0 (aet); Dallas Burn 2 Chicago Fire 0; Kansas City Wizards 1 San Jose Earthquakes 4; Los Angeles Galaxy 1 DC United 0 (aet).
Sep 25: MetroStars 0 DC United 2.
Sep 27: Los Angeles Galaxy 1 Kansas City Wizards 2; San Jose Earthquakes 5 Dallas Burn 2.
Sep 28: DC United 1 MetroStars 1 (aet); New England Revolution 3 Columbus Crew 2 (aet).
Oct 1: Colorado Rapids 1 Chicago Fire 1 (aet).
Oct 4: Columbus Crew 1 DC United 1 (aet); Chicago Fire 2 Los Angeles Galaxy 0; Dallas Burn 1 New England Revolution 4; Kansas City Wizards 4 Colorado Rapids 2.
Oct 5: San Jose Earthquakes 0 MetroStars 2.

USA – EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chicago Fire	27	13	8	6	45	34	47
MetroStars	27	11	8	8	37	33	41
DC United	27	10	8	9	35	31	38
New England	27	9	9	9	47	44	36
Columbus Crew	27	8	8	11	35	38	32

USA – WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Jose	27	14	7	6	44	31	49
Colorado Rapids	27	11	6	10	34	37	39
Kansas City	27	9	8	10	44	42	35
LA Galaxy	27	8	8	11	30	32	32
Dallas Burn	27	5	4	18	31	60	19

LEADING GOALSCORERS
15 Taylor Twellman (New England Revolution)
14 Carlos Ruiz (Los Angeles Galaxy)

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Quarter-finals groups

Group A

September 19

Ismaili (Egy) 2
Simba (Tan) 1

September 21

ASEC Abidjan (IvC) 0
Enyimba (Nig) 2

October 3

Ismaili 2 (Dimy og 10, Abougreisha 33)
ASEC Abidjan 0
HT: 2-0

October 5

Simba 2 (Gabriel 24, Pawasa 65)
Enyimba 1 (Tyakase 36)
HT: 1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ismaili	5	3	2	0	11	3	11
Enyimba	5	3	0	2	10	9	9
Simba	5	2	1	2	4	6	7
ASEC Abidjan	5	0	1	4	2	9	1

Oct 19
ASEC Abidjan v Simba
Enyimba v Ismaili

Group B

September 20

Esperance (Tun) 1
AS Aviacao (Ang) 0

September 21

Canon Yaounde (Cam) 0
USM Alger (Alg) 2

October 3

USM Alger 2 (Benchergui, Dziri)
AS Aviacao 0

October 5

Canon Yaounde 1 (Oumar 8)
Esperance 1 (Melki 32)
HT: 1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Esperance	5	3	2	0	5	2	11
USM Alger	5	3	0	2	7	2	9
AS Aviacao	5	1	1	3	2	5	4
Canon Yaounde	5	1	1	3	4	9	4

Oct 18
AS Aviacao v Canon Yaounde
Esperance v USM Alger

Top two from each group qualify for semi-finals

CUP-WINNERS CUP

Quarter-finals, 2nd legs

Sep 20: APR FC (Rwa) 1 Asante Kotoko (Gha) 0 *Agg 2-2. APR on away goals*; Julius Berger (Nig) 3 Baladeyet Al Mehalla (Egy) 1 *Julius Berger 4-2 on agg*; Wydad Casablanca (Mor) 1 Power Dynamos (Zam) 0 *Agg 2-2. Wydad on away goals.*
Sep 21: Etoile Sahel (Tun) 2 Africa Sports (IvC) 1 *Etoile 3-1 on agg.*

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Oct 4: Julius Berger 3 APR FC 0.
Oct 5: Etoile Sahel 2 Wydad Casablanca 0.

CAF CUP

Quarter-finals, 2nd legs

Sep 20: Green Buffaloes (Zam) 1 Club Africain (Tun) 1 *Club Africain 5-2 on agg*; Raja Casablanca (Mor) 5 Black Rhinos (Zim) 1 *Raja 6-2 on agg.*
Sep 21: Al Ahly (Egy) 0 Enugu Rangers (Nig) 0 *Enugu 4-0 on agg*; Cotonsport (Cam) 2 JS Kabylie (Alg) 1 *Cotonsport 2-1 on agg.*

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Oct 4: Raja Casablanca 4 Enugu Rangers 1.
Oct 5: Cotonsport 3 Club Africain 0.

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Final, 1st leg

Oct 3
Al Ain (UAE) 2 (Johar 38, Omar 74)
BEC Tero Sesana 0
HT: 1-0
Al Ain: Salem - Afanou, A Ali, Massari, Jawhar (Rashed 75), Hareb (F Ali 61), Fakher, Khater, Majidi (Yaslam), Omar, Rodrigo Mendes.
BEC: Phansa - Witthaya, Dusit, Worachai, Sakesan (Satid), Nirut, Therdsak, Datsakorn, Sakchai, Jatupong, Worrawoot (Khwangchai 76).

JAPAN

SECOND STAGE

Sep 13: Urawa Reds 0 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Kashima Antlers 0 Vegalta Sendai 0; Kashiwa Reysol 0 Oita Trinita 0; FC Tokyo 2 JEF United Ichihara 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 2 Jubilo Iwata 2; Cerezo Osaka 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 3; Vissel Kobe 0 Tokyo Verdy 1969 3.
Sep 14: Shimizu S-Pulse 1 Gamba Osaka 1.
Sep 20: Tokyo Verdy 1969 4 Cerezo Osaka 2; JEF United Ichihara 1 Kashiwa Reysol 1; Jubilo Iwata 1 Kashima Antlers 1; Oita Trinita 1 Urawa Reds 3; Vegalta Sendai 2 FC Tokyo 2; Yokohama F Marinos 5 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2; Gamba Osaka 2 Vissel Kobe 2.
Sep 23: Urawa Reds 2 JEF United Ichihara 2; Vissel Kobe 1 Yokohama F Marinos 1; FC Tokyo 1 Jubilo Iwata 2; Shimizu S-Pulse 0 Oita Trinita 0; Nagoya Grampus Eight 3 Cerezo Osaka 1; Kashima Antlers 1 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1; Kashiwa Reysol 1 Vegalta Sendai 0; Gamba Osaka 2 Tokyo Verdy 1969 2.
Sep 27: Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 FC Tokyo 1; Vegalta Sendai 1 Urawa Reds 6; Cerezo Osaka 1 Kashima Antlers 1; Oita Trinita 2 Vissel Kobe 2; JEF United Ichihara 2 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Yokohama F Marinos 1 Gamba Osaka 0.
Sep 28: Tokyo Verdy 1969 4 Nagoya Grampus Eight 4; Jubilo Iwata 1 Kashiwa Reysol 1.
Oct 4: Gamba Osaka 0 Vegalta Sendai 1; Vissel Kobe 1 Jubilo Iwata 3; Kashiwa Reysol 2 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2; FC Tokyo 5 Kashima Antlers 1; Yokohama F Marinos 1 JEF United Ichihara 0; Urawa Reds 3 Cerezo Osaka 0.
Oct 5: Oita Trinita 0 Tokyo Verdy 1969 2; Shimizu S-Pulse 1 Kyoto Purple Sanga 0.

JAPAN – 2ND STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yokohama FM	9	5	3	1	16	9	18
Urawa Reds	9	5	2	2	20	10	17
Tokyo Verdy	9	4	4	1	23	15	16
Grampus Eight	9	4	3	2	20	16	15
JEF United	9	4	3	2	15	12	15
Kashiwa Reysol	9	3	5	1	9	7	14
Kashima Antlers	9	3	5	1	10	11	14
FC Tokyo	9	3	4	2	19	13	13
Jubilo Iwata	9	3	4	2	13	12	13
Shimizu S-Pulse	9	3	3	3	11	13	12
Gamba Osaka	9	2	4	3	10	11	10
Kyoto PS	9	2	3	4	9	13	9
Vegalta Sendai	9	1	4	4	9	19	7
Oita Trinita	9	0	5	4	4	10	5
Cerezo Osaka	9	1	2	6	13	21	5
Vissel Kobe	9	0	4	5	8	17	4

SOUTH KOREA

Sep 7: Ulsan 1 Daejeon 0; Busan 3 Suwon 2; Chunnam 1 Gwangju 1; Chonbuk 2 Bucheon 1; Pohang 0 Daegu 0.
Sep 14: Bucheon 1 Pohang 2; Gwangju 2 Chonbuk 0; Chunnam 1 Songnam 2; Suwon 2 Anyang 0; Daejeon 1 Busan 0; Daegu 1 Ulsan 1.
Sep 21: Pohang 0 Chonbuk 1; Chunnam 3 Bucheon 3; Gwangju 1 Anyang 0; Songnam 1 Busan 1; Suwon 2 Ulsan 2; Daegu 2 Daejeon 1.
Sep 24: Daejeon 0 Suwon 0; Ulsan 1 Songnam 1; Busan 1 Gwangju 0; Anyang 2 Bucheon 0; Chunnam 1 Pohang 0; Daegu 0 Chonbuk 0.
Oct 1: Chonbuk 1 Pohang 2; Chunnam 0 Bucheon 0; Anyang 1 Gwangju 2; Busan 1 Songnam 3; Ulsan 0 Suwon 2; Daejeon 3 Daegu 2.
Oct 5: Daejeon 1 Ulsan 1; Suwon 3 Busan 0; Songnam 5 Anyang 1; Chunnam 1 Gwangju 0; Bucheon 2 Chonbuk 3; Daegu 0 Pohang 1.
Oct 8: Pohang 4 Bucheon 1; Chonbuk 2 Gwangju 0; Chunnam 0 Songnam 0; Anyang 1 Suwon 2; Busan 1 Daejeon 0; Ulsan 0 Daegu 0.

SOUTH KOREA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Songnam	35	24	7	4	68	32	79
Ulsan	37	18	11	8	53	36	65
Suwon	36	15	13	8	46	36	58
Chonbuk	36	15	12	9	57	45	57
Chunnam	36	13	17	6	52	42	56
Pohang	36	14	11	11	45	40	53
Daejeon	37	14	11	12	41	43	53
Anyang	36	12	11	13	61	57	47
Gwangju	37	12	5	20	36	47	41
Busan	36	10	8	18	32	57	38
Daegu	37	4	14	19	28	52	26
Bucheon	37	2	10	25	35	67	16

The most important games over the next four weeks

Mon, October 20
Kuwait v Egypt (friendly)

Tue/Wed, October 21/22
UEFA Champions League Matchday 3

Fri, October 24
Algeria v Zambia (friendly, Algiers)

Sat, October 25
Argentina v Mexico (friendly, Chicago)

Tue/Wed, November 4/5
UEFA Champions League Matchday 4

Thu, November 6
UEFA Cup second round, 1st legs

Wed, November 12
Mexico v Nigeria (friendly, tbc)

Fri, November 14
Malawi v Ethiopia
(World Cup qualifier, Blantyre)
Mauritania v Zimbabwe
(World Cup qualifier, Nouakchott)
Mali v Guinea-Bissau
(World Cup qualifier, Bamako)
Liberia v Gambia
(World Cup qualifier, Monrovia)
Cape Verde Islands v Swaziland
(World Cup qualifier, Praia)
Benin v Madagascar
(World Cup qualifier, Cotonou)
Algeria v Niger
(World Cup qualifier, Algiers)

Next Month...

EURO 2004

the countdown begins in earnest

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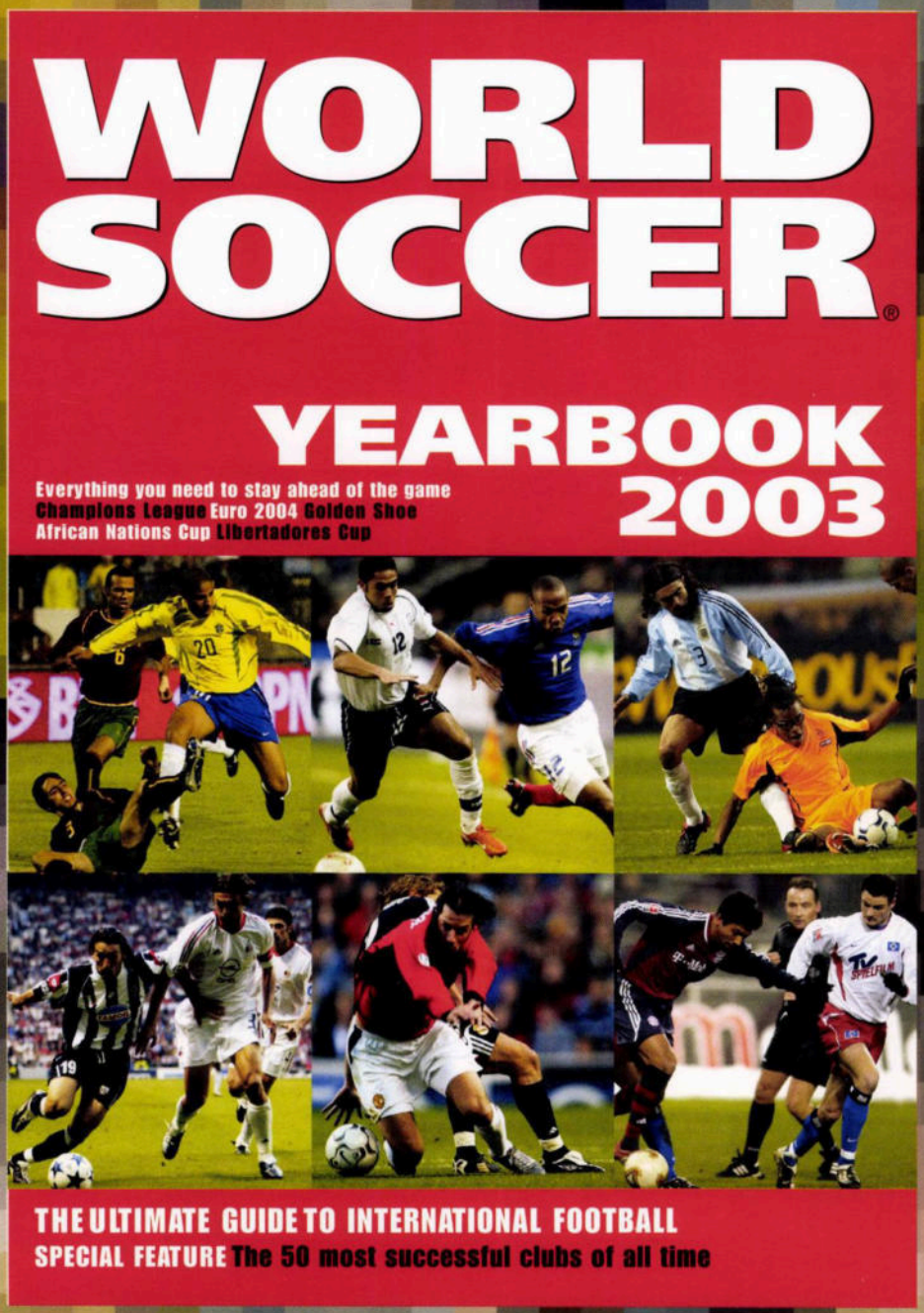

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